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FRANCIS HOBEN WELSHBY, M.A.

Aged 63.

THE LIFE  
OF THE  
REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.,  
FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD:  
IN WHICH ARE INCLUDED,  
THE LIFE OF HIS BROTHER,  
THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, A. M.,  
STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH,  
AND MEMOIRS OF THEIR FAMILY:  
COMPREHENDING AN ACCOUNT OF  
**The Great Revival of Religion,**  
IN WHICH THEY WERE THE FIRST AND CHIEF INSTRUMENTS.

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BY THE REV HENRY MOORE,  
ONLY SURVIVING TRUSTEE OF MR. WESLEY'S MSS.

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*According to this time it shall be said, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?"*  
NUMBERS xxiii, 23.  
*"Not by might, nor by power, but by MY SPIRIT," saith the Lord of Hosts.*  
ZECH. iv, 6.

Venturaeque hiemis memores, astate laborem  
Experiuntur, et in medium quasita reponunt.  
VIRGILII GEORG.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.  
VOL. I.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN KERSHAW, 14, CITY-ROAD,  
AND 66, PATERNOSTER-ROW





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## ERRATUM.

In the Preface, page ii, line 11,  
For “appear in writings,” read “appear in *his own* writings.”

## P R E F A C E .

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MR. WESLEY is universally allowed to have been an extraordinary man. His long life, spent in great and uninterrupted labours, and his eminent success as a minister of the Gospel, in this and other countries, mark him out as a highly distinguished character.

However, like all eminent men, he paid to the public the usual tax of censure. Many were his enemies, and many the aspersions thrown out against him. But he rose above them all ; and the general voice at length confessed, that he was free from vice, and a man of real virtue and piety. His death put an end even to that favourite accusation, “ that he was amassing riches by his influence over his societies :” For he died worth nothing except his books, and left even these burdened with a heavy debt. It is therefore reasonable to suppose, that a History of the Life and Labours of this great and good man will be acceptable to the public, and especially to the truly religious of every denomination.

Some, who have been acquainted with Mr. Wesley, and have read his printed Journals, may per-

haps think, that no other account of him is needful ; and that his own writings are abundantly sufficient to enable the public to form a just estimate both of the man, and of the great work in which he was engaged. This was the decided and avowed opinion of the compiler of these volumes, immediately after the death of their venerable subject. Mr. Wesley had so regularly detailed the occurrences and labours of his whole life, and his doctrines and motives so largely appear in writings, that it was feared the subject, if undertaken by any other, would, as Cicero said concerning Cæsar's Commentaries, but mar the beauty and weaken the effect of the whole. This opinion, however, was soon relinquished. It was quickly announced, that a Life of Mr. Wesley, by Mr. John Hampson, junior, afterwards Rector of Sunderland, was then in the press. He had intended to publish it during the life of the Founder of Methodism ; on whose unexpected decease, all publicity was given to the intended work. Mr. Hampson's motives could not be mistaken. He had been in connexion with Mr. Wesley for some years, as a preacher of the Gospel, having been introduced by his father, an old Itinerant, and received with that charity, but not with that caution ; which Mr. Wesley usually displayed. Indeed, this young man was the first instance of a preacher's irregular admittance into the Connexion. Mr. Wesley had cause to be dissatisfied with the father for a considerable time before, on account

of his avowed democratic principles;\* and, in the issue, had still less cause for satisfaction in the son. But he remembered that Divine direction, “*Judge nothing before the time,*” and behaved to them with his wonted kindness.

That “time” soon arrived. THE DEED OF DECLARATION, which is now well known, will be considered in its proper place: By it the Chapels throughout the Methodist Connexion obtained a legal settlement, one hundred Preachers being enrolled by name, in the Court of Chancery, as THE CONFERENCE, to whom the right of appointing persons to occupy the pulpits was, by the Trust-Deeds of those chapels, specially secured. In filling up that document, the names of both the Hampsons, father and son, were omitted. This greatly offended the elder Hampson, who strove to make a party against the Deed; and the son naturally partook of the feeling in which his father indulged. But that attempt failed; and Mr. Wesley affectionately consented to receive an apology at the following Conference, chiefly through the intercession of Mr. Fletcher, so that the father and son were again appointed to circuits. The elder Hampson, however, departed from his circuit before the end of the year, and

\* It is strange, that such principles should find a place in the breast of any man, who thinks himself called of God to “have nothing to do, but to save souls,” and who, therefore, ought to have no more regard to the course, or the principles, of this world, than his Divine Master or his Apostles had.



accepted an offer to superintend a school in the county of Kent. About the same time the young man listened to a proposal from some pious gentlemen, who had formed an association for introducing religious young men into the ministry in the Church of England; and having received the rudiments of a classical education in Mr. Wesley's school at Kingswood, he was sent by them to Oxford. They both addressed letters of resignation to Mr. Wesley, which were read to him, in course, by the writer of these Memoirs. The father wrote under a strong feeling of resentment, and displayed many of his old principles. The young man wrote with more mildness, and expressed some grateful acknowledgments of the many benefits which he had received; but, it was very apparent, that he thoroughly participated in the irritation of the father. Quite enough was said by both, about the arbitrary power exercised by Mr. Wesley;\* who took little notice of these letters at first, only saying to me, "You see the strength of the cause." But he was afterwards much moved, when he considered the mischief that might ensue; and said, with some warmth, "I have been too

\* Mr. Wesley's *arbitrary power*, so called, was exercised, from first to last, in keeping his associates to that *work of God*, that wholly religious design and employment, which they all professed to embrace as their duty and calling, when they joined him: And from this he certainly would not consent that any of them should swerve. In every thing else, he was, even by their own account, a father, and a friend.

tender of these men. *You* should have opposed my receiving them again. You know I halt on that foot."

That Mr. Hampson's *LIFE of Mr. Wesley* would not be a friendly one, was easily augured; and the perusal of it fully justified the supposition. It was the "*amende honorable*" made to the Church into which, when he wrote it, he was about to enter as a Minister. But, I believe, none of those from whom he had departed expected to see laboured dissertations introduced into the Memoir, with an evident purpose to overthrow those doctrines of the Gospel which he had formerly professed to believe, and the power of which he must have professed to experience, before he could be admitted into that Connexion of which Mr. Wesley was the head! He was constrained, however, as all others have been, to acknowledge the great virtues and talents of the man, whom it was the design of his book to lessen in the estimation of the public.

Mr. Wesley had devised by Will all his Manuscripts to "Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt, or published, as they should see good." At the period of his decease, Dr. Coke was in America, and Mr. Moore was fully engaged as an Itinerant. Dr. Whitehead resided in London, and was at that time a Local Preacher, acting under the direction of Mr. J. Rogers, the Superintendant of the Circuit.

Dr. Whitehead had been an Itinerant Preacher for some years. He then married and settled in

business at Bristol. From thence he removed to Wandsworth, in the vicinity of London, and opened a school. . He there became acquainted with the late Dr. Lettsom, two of whose sons were his pupils. Under the Doctor's direction he studied physic, and by his recommendation he obtained from the late Mr. Barclay, an eminent Quaker, the appointment of guardian to his son, who was pursuing his studies at Leyden in Holland. Mr. Whitehead himself at the same time completed his own studies in that University, and returned to England with the diploma of DOCTOR OF MEDICINE. He had, some time before, joined the Society of Quakers; and, by their influence chiefly, he obtained the situation of Physician to the London Dispensary. After a few years, he again joined the Methodist Society, and was received by Mr. Wesley with his usual kindness.

The rumour of the intended publication of Mr. Hampson's Memoirs decided Mr. Wesley's friends to publish a Life of him, for the benefit of that charity to which he had bequeathed all his literary property. At a Meeting held by the Preachers for the purpose of giving effect to this determination, at which Mr. Wesley's Executors, and other friends, were present, it was proposed by Mr. Rogers, that Dr. Whitehead should compile a Life of Mr. Wesley, from his published Journals, and other documents in print and manuscript, for which he should receive One Hundred Guineas, as a remuneration for his trouble and loss of time. To this proposal Dr. Whitehead cheerfully acceded, and it was unanimously adopted

as the resolution of the Meeting. The manuscripts were also deposited with him, under an express stipulation that they should be examined according to the Will of the Testator, previously to any of them being published. At the following Conference this agreement was confirmed in every particular, and Dr. Whitehead was appointed a member of the Book Committee in London.

He had now an opportunity of proving the sincerity of his attachment to his old friends, and to the cause which, with various changes, he had first and last espoused. This opportunity he lost. His reputed friends considered his engagement respecting the Life of Mr. Wesley, as the effect of weakness: and he was told, “that he ought not to regard it; that the work would produce a great sum of money; that he might realize *Two Thousand Pounds* by it; and that, to be thus employed for so small a sum as *One Hundred*, would be an act of injustice to himself and his family.” The Doctor unhappily listened to this advice, and fell into the temptation. To the astonishment of those who were immediately concerned in this affair, he declared, “that he would write the Life of Mr. Wesley *as an independent man*; that the copy-right should be solely his own; and that, if it should be printed at the Office of the Conference, he would have half of the clear profits.” But that which constituted his indelible dishonour, was his absolute refusal to suffer the manuscripts, with which he had been intrusted, to

be examined according to the Will of the Testator. The effrontery and injustice of the man utterly confounded those with whom he had entered into the former engagements.

*It must needs be*, considering what human nature is, *that offences should come*. Every religious society, however pure in its origin, has had, after some time, its offended and prejudiced members. The Doctor's advisers were of this description. He had listened to them, and departed from simplicity and rectitude. They now embarked with him in the design to which they had given birth, and formed themselves into a "Committee to advise, support, and defend Dr. Whitehead." A party was thus formed, which troubled and divided the Society in London for a considerable time; and many were hurt by the contention. The Preachers, and those who supported them in their just and benevolent views, laboured to bring the Doctor to a better mind; but their efforts were in vain. Nothing but a suit in Chancery would do, and this could not be safely undertaken, without the consent of the Conference. No course therefore seemed to remain, except that of publishing a Life of Mr. Wesley, to be compiled by the two remaining Trustees of his Manuscripts. This was accordingly performed, without the smallest personal emolument to them, and with a success which was beyond their most sanguine expectations.

Nothing was introduced into that Life to give even a hint of the unhappy dispute which had

arisen. It was not expected, however, that Dr. Whitehead would follow this pacific example. His character had been awfully compromised; and, under a feeling of the need of self-defence, he lost no opportunity of defaming the Preachers in the Memoirs which he gave to the world. Although a known Dissenter in principle, he assumed the language and sentiments of a High-Church man, and laboured in that way to exalt the character of Mr. Charles Wesley, at the expence of his brother, and of the Itinerant Preachers. He is particularly sarcastic and bitter in treating of Mr. Wesley's giving a regular ministry, by Ordination with imposition of hands, to the Societies in America after their political independency had been acknowledged by the mother-country. Among gamblers, it is said, the loser is considered as having a privilege to rail: The Doctor had a feeling somewhat similar to this, added to the party spirit by which he was influenced. He had been much pleased with Mr. Wesley's exercise of that power in his Societies; and had applied to him, through the compiler of the present work, requesting to receive ordination from his hands, and to be appointed a Superintendent. He engaged, in that case, to relinquish the Dispensary and his medical practice, and to come out into the work of the ministry as at the beginning. As I felt an ardent wish to serve my friend in what I esteemed to be his best interests, I accordingly informed Mr. Wesley of the Doctor's request, adding my own to it. Mr.

Wesley replied to every part of my letter except that which concerned the Doctor; on this point not a word was written. Hoping, with the Doctor, that the omission was to be attributed to forgetfulness, I wrote again, and strongly repeated the former request. The answer was as before,—a total silence on that point. The Doctor's disappointment was extreme. I believe, at that time, he sincerely desired to resume what he considered to be the call of God, given in his best days; but he would not undertake the work again without Ordination. Mr. Wesley loved the man; but he knew his versatility, and would not trust him again with so important an office.

I have now lying before me a minute account of all these transactions, the publication of which I hope will never be required. It is needful, however, that I should state thus much respecting the Doctor, as I shall be obliged to animadvert on many parts of the Memoirs which he has published. His book is still extant, and should be answered, though he himself is no longer accountable to men.

When Dr. Whitehead had made such use of Mr. Wesley's papers as he thought proper, he returned them to the Chapel-house in the City-Road, in the year 1796. But those into whose hands they fell, seem to have had no more regard to Mr. Wesley's will than the Doctor himself. The trustees of Mr. Wesley's manuscripts were thus again deprived of many valuable documents, which would have made this Life more complete. So easy is it to follow a

bad example ! So light does trespass appear, when once the hedge is broken ! Upon my expostulating with those who acted thus, the papers and manuscript books *that remained*, were sent to me ; but none of those which had been thus unjustly taken away have to this day been restored. Wherever they are found, they belong to me ; and those which have been published, either by Dr. Whitehead, or any other person, are my property, which I shall freely use, according to my best judgment. Among those which have been restored to me, there are several documents, which are highly useful in such a work, and have never yet been printed.

A Life of Mr. Wesley, as full as possible, without being tedious, seems now to be a desideratum, especially since the strange Memoir lately published by Robert Southey, Esq., Poet Laureat. Concerning that production, it may be thought that little need be said, as it has been an ample subject of animadversion in various publications, and has been ably reviewed by Mr. Watson. It has indeed been generally acknowledged, by competent judges of religious biography, that the names of WESLEY and of SOUTHEY were never designed to be joined together in the same sentence. But Mr. Southey is, to use the words of Johnson, a writer by trade,—an able and industrious servant of all work. His industry, indeed, is conspicuous and laudable. It has been said, and, we believe, with truth, that Mr. Southey exerts himself beyond almost any writer, to collect every



thing which bears on his undertaking. He lays the whole world of letters under contribution, for facts, images, and arguments, until every magazine of information is utterly exhausted. He has thus given such a portrait of Mr. Wesley, and of the eminent characters connected with him, as has astonished both the religionists and the sceptics of the present age. They were not prepared to see religion in its peace, power, and purity, as set forth not only in the writings of Mr. Wesley, but of the Fathers of the Church of England, described as a *mental disease* of the most pitiable description: which, nevertheless, excited the subjects of it to the most extraordinary exertions for the good of mankind, (a good, not only acknowledged, but applauded by Mr. Southey,) and which continued without intermission during threescore years! The work, too, in which these worthies were engaged, is owned to have been planned with a wisdom, and executed with an energy, that astonishes the biographer himself! He considers also the subject of his history, not only as a man of the greatest natural endowments, of the deepest and most solid erudition, of “great views and great virtues;” but as one whose sincerity in religion can never be questioned,—who “loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his strength, and his neighbour as himself.”\* He considers him not only as sacrificing ease, (and that of the most

\* Mr. Southey does not know, that this love, through faith in an atoning Saviour, is the “Christian Perfection” against which he inveighs so much!

bewitching kind, *learned ease*,) honour, emolument, and all that the world admires and longs after, but as not counting even his life dear, provided he might be the instrument of making men the happy partakers of that kingdom of God, that *righteousness, peace, and joy*, for which the Eternal Son of God not only “laid his glory by, and wrapped himself in our clay,” but gave his life a ransom for the world, “*an offering and a sacrifice to God.*”

This great man is, however, represented by Mr. Southey, not only as labouring under the disease already mentioned, (which, with the pertinacity of the cuckoo, he calls ENTHUSIASM, without once defining the term,) but as artful, politic, and ambitious beyond all men;—spreading delight wherever he came by the buoyancy of his own happiness, and exciting all around to follow after every virtue and every grace that can adorn the human character; yet, at the same time, exciting the uneducated and uninformed part of the community to embark in the wildest schemes of religious fanaticism that could occupy the hearts of the children of men!

Such a work might be expected to excite great interest; and the very high price of the book, has not, I believe, prevented an extensive sale. It comes, however, a little too late to do much harm. Religion, even that religion which Mr. Southey denominates, “the religion of the heart,” has been going onward for many years, according to the Divine intimation, *from the least*

*to the greatest.* As of old when it began at *Nazareth*, taking its course upward, it has leavened our Universities and our Literary Societies; given a religious character to many of our polite circles; introduced an evangelical ministry into the Established Church; quickened the Dissenters, by leading them to recur to their first principles; and given us to see again *saints in Cæsar's household*.

It is in vain that Mr. Southey is found the apologist of Warburton, Middleton, and even of Lavington—

Who prov'd, and prov'd, and prov'd at last,  
When Wesley held the Proteus fast,—  
Christianity alone exists  
In Papists and in Methodists!

The deplorable ignorance of evangelical truth which was manifest in those enemies to the *rise* of Methodism, sheltered itself under the imposing character of great learning and high station; and for a time it shed a baneful influence on the heavenly plant. But

The day is broke which never more shall close.

Methodism is now so recognized, as being, in truth, old Christianity, that it defies the renewed attack which has been made upon its doctrines in the pages of Mr. Southey.

The history of an *ambitious* man is, in reality, the history of a hypocrite. Religious ambition is the worst of all hypocrisy; for it is ambition acting

in the name of God. In drawing the portrait of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Southey unites enthusiasm with ambition. In such a biographer, this course is perfectly natural. From his whole work it undeniably appears, that Mr. Southey knows nothing about religion, as purifying the deceitful and desperately wicked heart of man from ambition, with its concomitant evils. From this vicious passion, he seems very cordially to believe, no person ever was or can be saved ; and even contemplates it as an original temper in man, which, consequently, his Maker cannot justly condemn. Hence arise his hatred, and contempt of the doctrine of Christian Perfection ; which is in truth the only possible cure for that and all other corruptions of our fallen nature, by fixing in the heart that constant love of God and man, which is the fruit of *faith made perfect*. Mr. Southey seems also not to know, that sincerity is essential to the character of an Enthusiast, and even to that enthusiasm which is unscriptural, and therefore a real mental disease ; and that it is totally incompatible with ambition. There can be no doubt, from his statements, that he considers salvation from that Babel of the natural man, even by the atonement of the Son of God, and by the whole power of the Eternal Spirit, as promised to man through that atonement, to be only a creature of the imagination.—Perhaps to a mere poetical creation,—to such a “ fine phrenzy” in drawing an ideal character,—Mr. Southey would not object : but he seems to have no con-

ception, that God ever did, or indeed ever could, realize such a character. “ *The world knoweth us not,*” says St. John; “ *because it knew Him not.*”

Men will endeavour to account for the most stupendous works without God; and he who will not believe the Bible, will believe any thing against it. Gibbon, the Historian, thus tried to account for the conversion of the whole heathen world; which drew forth that sarcasm from Paley, that the religion of the Roman Empire was overthrown by a Jewish peasant! Mr. Southey accounts for Methodism in a similar way; and the mockers on the day of Pentecost accounted for that illustrious display of the power of GOD THE SPIRIT, in his poor and weak instruments, by imputing the manifest elevation of their minds to the operation of new wine! To every such dreamer we may reply, “ *Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.*”—*The mystery of the faith, kept in a pure conscience, is indeed a mystery to Mr. Southey. God grant that it may not so continue!*

The founder of Methodism is frequently complimented by Mr. Southey. He supposes Mr. Wesley would have been the Founder of an Order, or perhaps the General of the Jesuits, if he had been in the Romish Church! Mr. Southey might imagine something similar respecting St. Paul, and that *his* “ *ambitious, restless spirit*” would in some such way have found employment and gratification, if Christianity, in its beauty and glory,

had not intervened, and given him an opportunity to *turn the world upside down*. Mr. Wesley, as well as the Jewish bigot, had doubtless ability and courage quite sufficient to obtain that or any similar advancement. But they both laid their bigotry and narrow spirit at the feet of Him who "*tasted death for every man*," and who commanded that his "*Gospel should be preached to every creature*." They both became Christians, and (with Mr. Southey's good leave) Perfectionists. Their "*love was made perfect*;" and, walking in love, they looked upon the guilty children of men *with the bowels of Jesus Christ*. But the path which was prescribed by that love, utterly unfitted them for such preferment as Mr. Southey supposes. With the Apostle Mr Southey does not meddle: *He* is a Saint by prescription; and to attack him, would forfeit the Laureate's reputation in the world. There is a Halo round the converted persecutor, which repels the bold dissector of characters. Bishop Warburton called Mr. Wesley, the Apostle's "Mimic," adding the epithet "paltry:" This "mimic" seems fair game with Mr. Southey, and with his patrons the Booksellers. It is for that gentleman to consider, (and I hope he will seriously consider it,) that the day may come, when the friend and pupil of Hume, the bold historian of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and the compiler of "The Life of Wesley," may be considered as having been engaged in the same work,—as "*kicking against the pricks*," and labour-

ing (the latter unconsciously, we trust,) to save mankind from “*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

My duty lies plain before me. Mr. Wesley needs no panegyrist; and, indeed, for such an office I should be utterly incompetent. “*His witness is in heaven, and his record is on high.*” But to rescue the character of such a man, and such labours, from interested, prejudiced, or ignorant declaimers, is worth some pains. I must again state the plain facts; connecting and elucidating them, so as to give a clear view of the man, and of the work in which he was so long engaged. It is especially my duty to do this, since enquiry is much more excited; and being now in possession of ample materials, were I not to do it, I should be involved in the guilt of unfaithfulness both to the dead and the living.

METHODISM (so called) identifies itself with CHRISTIANITY in this striking peculiarity, that it is the same this day as it was in the beginning. Every attempt to mend it has utterly failed, and only served to shew the ignorance and the weakness of the attempt. A “*falling away*” from Christianity was predicted, (2 Thess. ii, 3,) but yet “*the gates of hell prevailed not.*”—The “*grain of mustard-seed,*” as our Lord describes his religion in its rise, “*became a great tree, so that the fowls of the air lodged in the branches;*” and many of them proved to be “*unclean and filthy birds.*” Exotics were planted around it, and the sacred tree was thus hidden for ages and generations: but it

remained the same. The plants that obscured it were esteemed decorations; the world loved them, and warred against all that objected to them. The keen eyes of Luther, and of some of his predecessors, discerned the plant of God's own planting, and denounced the corrupt exotics. Mr. Wesley, after great toil, discovered it in England: and, much to the displeasure of those who had forgotten our martyred Bishops and Confessors, he planted scions from the sacred tree in every part of the land; and, though greatly increased in magnitude, they still exhibit the genuine fruits of the common stock from which they are derived. They cannot be improved. "What a Legislator!" says Mr. Southey. "What plans!" "What a system!" says another writer, "grown up so rapidly, and yet established so firmly! Its rules so admirably contrived for perpetuating and enlarging its influence! A system so *entirely* religious, and founded on all those grand principles which characterise the Gospel of Christ!"—And was this, we ask, the work of man? Yes, as the work recorded in the Acts of the Apostles was of man. The workmen in England had no more *plan* than the workmen in Judea. The Acts of the Apostles may with truth be called, the Acts of the Holy Ghost. Mr. Hampson, in his sarcastic way, says of Mr. Wesley, "He called the work in which he was engaged, THE WORK OF GOD." Mr. Hampson gave it the same appellation, while he was engaged in it, else he



would never have been so employed. It rescued him, as it did many others, from poverty and vice. But he soon grew weary of such a work, and, like Mark or Demas, chose one more easy and honourable. Had it, indeed, been the work of man, it would long since have come to nought; for the powers of earth and hell were banded against it. And it will continue, notwithstanding these renewed efforts, till it has

Filled the earth with golden fruit,  
With ripe millennial love.

The name of Wesley will not then be forgotten; neither will those of his co-adjutors, some of whom Mr. Southey has condescended to notice, giving them, with the same inconsistency, their share of praise, and of the general opprobrium. They will shine among those “*who have turned many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*”

Mr. Southey observes, that “in some of Mr. Wesley’s biographers, the *heart* has been wanting to understand his worth, or the *will* to do it justice.” This we must allow: I have with pain stated it in this preface, and acknowledge that, in this respect, Mr. Southey rises above them. But he adds, “others have not possessed freedom or strength of intellect to perceive wherein he was erroneous.” Mr. Southey, according to his own shewing, has only discovered his *Enthusiasm*; and what that discovery amounts to, Mr. Southey has

not informed us. When Mr. Fletcher, who was certainly one of the first men of his day, Mr. Southey's great and almost impeccable favourite, did not, after a long and close intimacy, discover wherein Mr. Wesley, whom he always called "Father," was erroneous, it is no wonder that the evil was hidden from his common friends: and I confess, that I have neither the *heart* nor the *head* that could make the discovery. I can, however, remember the time when I had both; when I could cry out "Enthusiast!" "Fanatic!" as readily as Mr. Southey himself, (for whom therefore I feel much,) and could set the bubble *virtue*, and *the pride of Churchmanship*, against the Scriptures, and the real doctrines of our venerable Establishment; thus "*speaking evil of the things,*" (the things of God!) "*which I knew not.*" From this deep mixture of pride and ignorance I was delivered, by my long-suffering and gracious Redeemer, before I had any connection with the people called Methodists, or with their venerable Founder. But his writings and preaching, with the preaching of his sons in the Gospel, alone strengthened and settled me in that "*work of the Spirit of God*" which had delivered me from the "*deceivableness of unrighteousness*" in which I was involved; and confirmed me both in those great truths of the Gospel, and in that attachment to him and to his people, which the experience of nearly fifty years has not weakened, and which, I trust, will never be dissolved. Even now my state is so deplorable,

that a wish to maintain and propagate those errors which Mr. Southey has discovered—to maintain that “*foolishness of preaching*” and “*believing*,” without which there can be no life, power, or peace,—is, I acknowledge, the chief cause of my again bringing before the public Memoirs of the Apostolic Wesley. A wish to maintain that faith, and to prevent the mischief which a denial of it might produce in the world, rather than a desire to eulogise the man who suffered the loss of all which the world could offer him, that he might possess and propagate this pure religion, is the sole motive which could impel me to undertake the task. Were *the man* only concerned, I could be well content that the world should judge from his own writings between him and his mistaken or interested biographers. The reader who can believe,—that this man of “great views, great energy, and great virtues,” was stimulated by a mental disease to unparalleled labours for the good of mankind, and of those especially who most needed his labours,—and that he persevered in them for threescore years, with a success which astonishes and excites the admiration of the narrator;—the man who can believe all this, must himself, it should seem, have a mental disease, (alas, too common !) which even men of plain apprehension, but who read their bibles, may pronounce *pitiable*, and may even fear lest it should be incurable. Mr. Southey, whatever he may have intended, has written to pull down the faith, though he exalts the man. I write to main-

tain the faith; the man, with all competent judges, will be his own Eulogist.

I will also acknowledge, I am not wholly without fear that the very people raised up by Mr. Wesley's labours, and by those of his co-adjustors, who are distinguished by his honoured name, may be in some danger of stopping short of his faith, or of departing from it. If this fear should unhappily be realised, and a spurious race should in time succeed, it may be well to have a corrective of this kind at hand, without the trouble of a voluminous reference. We know what advantage the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the Church of England gave to Mr. Wesley in maintaining the cause of truth. That the Pulpit and the Reading Desk should be at variance, is not a mere supposition; and it is not impossible, (such is our opinion of human nature,) that Methodist pulpits may, in time, wander from the faith once delivered to the people: yea, that the people themselves may "*wish to have it so.*" It may therefore serve the cause of truth to have it known, (when the hand that now writes shall be mouldering in the dust,) in this way also, what were the real views, doctrines, and practice of those who now rest from their labours; that all who are in truth "*way-faring men*" in the path that leads to God, "*may not err therein,*" either through the wisdom or the ignorance of men who "*know not God.*"

My wish and aim, in publishing these Memoirs, is, to “*do good to all men ; though especially to the household of faith.*” But I am sensible, I shall need the candour of the Reader in detailing many particulars respecting these eminent men. It has been observed by a late writer, that “the language of egotism cannot well be avoided where the Biographer speaks from his own knowledge, and aims to delineate the features of an original character from more immediate intimacy and observation ;” and I may add, from personal and direct information.

# THE LIFE

OF THE

## REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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BOOK THE FIRST,  
*Containing an Account of his Family.*

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### CHAPTER I.

HIS GREAT GRAND-FATHER AND GRAND-FATHER WESLEY,  
AND HIS MATERNAL GRAND-FATHER ANNESLEY.

ACCOUNTS of Mr. Wesley's ancestors are sufficiently numerous. For a hundred years past, and to the present day, honourable mention has been made of them, and their worth is acknowledged to be of no common kind. I must, however, again present an account of them, but in a compressed form, to the readers of these Memoirs; that they may know the estimable root from which such a distinguished character as Mr. Wesley sprung, and may see that the *work of God*, which it is the design of these volumes to illustrate, did not originate with those ancestors. His own family, as well as the greatest part of the nation, at the time when Mr. Wesley entered on his vast labours, were, to use the words of the great Apostle, *shut up to the faith which should afterwards be revealed*.

Mr. Wesley's ancestors were eminent for learning and piety. BARTHOLOMEW WESLEY, his great-grandfather, was

educated in one of our Universities, and afterwards held the living of Allington in Dorsetshire. When the Act of Uniformity passed in 1662, he was ejected from his living, chusing rather to suffer the loss of all things than violate his conscience. While in the University, he had applied himself to the study of Physic as well as Divinity,—a practice not then fallen into disuse. He was often consulted as a physician while he held his living; and, after his ejection, devoted himself chiefly to the profession of medicine, though he still preached occasionally. It is said, that he used a peculiar plainness of speech, which hindered him from becoming a popular preacher. He lived several years after he was silenced; but the death of his son, John Wesley, of whom I shall next speak, affected him so much, that he afterwards declined apace, and did not long survive him.\*

JOHN WESLEY, M. A., of New-Inn Hall, Oxford, was son of Bartholomew, and grandfather of the late Rev. John Wesley. He remembered his Creator in the days of his youth; and, when a school-boy, had a very humbling sense of sin, and a serious concern for his salvation. He soon after began to keep a diary, in which he recorded the remarkable instances of providential care over him, and of the Lord's dealings with his soul. This method he continued, with very little intermission, to the end of his life.

During his stay at Oxford, he was noticed for his seriousness and diligence. He applied himself particularly to the study of the Oriental languages, in which he made much progress. Dr. John Owen, who was at that time Vice-Chancellor, had a great regard for him; which affords strong evidence both of his abilities and piety, at this early period of life. He began to preach at the age of twenty-two; and in May 1658, was sent to officiate at Whitchurch in Dorsetshire. Soon after the Restoration, some of his neighbours gave him a

\* See Nonconformists' Memorial, Vol. I. p. 442.

great deal of trouble, because he would not read the Common Prayer. They complained of him to the Bishop of Bristol, and laid many heavy things to his charge. Mr. Wesley, on being informed that the Bishop desired to speak with him, waited on his Lordship, and has recorded in his diary the conversation which arose on that occasion. As it displays the character of the man in a much clearer view than I can place it by any thing I am able to say, and as it reflects much honour upon the Bishop, considering the darkness of the times, I give it at large :

BISHOP. What is your name ?

WESLEY. John Wesley.

B. There are many great matters charged upon you.

W May it please your Lordship, Mr. Horlock was at my house on Tuesday last, and acquainted me that it was your Lordship's desire I should come to you : and on that account I am here to wait on you.

B. By whom were you ordained ? Or, are you ordained ?

W I am sent to preach the Gospel.

B. By whom were you sent ?

W By a Church of Jesus Christ.

B. What Church is that ?

W The Church of Christ at Melcomb.

B. That factious and heretical Church !

W May it please you, Sir, I know no faction or heresy that Church is guilty of.

B. No ! Did not you preach such things as tend to faction and heresy ?

W I am not conscious to myself of any such preaching.

B. I am informed by sufficient men, gentlemen of honour of this county, namely, Sir Gerard Napper, Mr. Freak, and Mr. Tregonnell, of your doings. What say you ?

W Those honoured gentlemen I have been with ; who,



being by others misinformed, proceeded with some heat against me.

B. There are oaths of several honest men; and shall we take your word for it, that all is but misinformation?

W There was no oath given or taken. Besides, if it be enough to accuse, who shall be innocent?—I can appeal to the determination of the great Day of Judgment, that the large catalogue of matters laid to me, are either things invented or mistaken.

B. Did not you ride with your sword, in the time of the Committee of Safety, and engage with them?

W Whatever imprudences in civil matters you may be informed I am guilty of, I shall crave leave to acquaint your Lordship, that his Majesty having pardoned them fully, I shall wave any other answer.

B. In what manner did the church you spake of, send you to preach? At this rate every body might preach.

W Not every one. Every body has not preaching gifts and preaching graces. Besides, that is not all I have to offer to your Lordship, to justify my preaching.

B. If you preach, it must be according to order, the order of the Church of England, upon ordination.

W What does your Lordship mean by ordination?

B. Do not you know what I mean?

W If you mean that sending, spoken of Romans x., I had it.

B. I mean that: What mission had you?

W I had a mission from God and man.

B. You must have it according to law, and the order of the Church of England.

W I am not satisfied in my spirit therein.

B. Not satisfied in your spirit! You have more new-coined phrases than ever were heard of! You mean your conscience, do you not?

W Spirit is no new phrase. We read of being sanctified in soul, body, and spirit.

B. By spirit there, we are to understand the upper region of the soul.

W Some think we are to take it for the conscience : but if your Lordship like it not so, then I say, I am not satisfied in conscience, as touching the ordination you speak of.

B. Conscience argues science, science supposes judgment, and judgment reason. What reason have you that you will not be thus ordained ?

W I came not this day to dispute with your Lordship ; my own inability would forbid me so to do.

B. No, no ; but give me your reason.

W I am not called to that office ; and therefore cannot be ordained.

B. Why have you then preached all this while ?

W I was called to the work of the ministry ; though not to the office. There is, as we believe, *Vocatio ad opus, et ad munus*.\*

B. Why may you not have the office of the ministry ?

W May it please your Lordship, because they are not a people who are fit subjects for me to exercise office-work among them.

B. You mean a gathered church : but we must have no gathered churches in England ; and you will see it so. For there must be a unity without divisions among us : and there can be no unity without uniformity.—Well then, we must send you to your church, that they may dispose of you, if you were ordained by them.

W I have been informed by my cousin Pitfield and others concerning your Lordship, that you have a disposition inclined against morosity. However you may be prepossessed by some bitter enemies to my person, yet, there are others, who can

\* A call to the work ; and a call to the office.

and will give you another character of me. Mr. Glisson hath done it. And Sir Francis Tulford desired me to present his service to you, and, being my hearer, is ready to acquaint you concerning me.

B. I asked Sir Francis Tulford whether the presentation to Whitchurch was his: Whose is it? He told me it was not his.

W There was none presented to it these sixty years. Mr. Walton lived there. At his departure the people desired me to preach to them; and when there was a way of settlement appointed, I was by the Trustees appointed, and by the Triers approved.

B. They would approve any, who would come to them and close with them. I know they approved those who could not read twelve lines of English.

W All that they did I know not: but I was examined touching gifts and graces.

B. I question not your gifts, Mr. Wesley; I will do you any good I can: But you will not long be suffered to preach, unless you will do it according to order.

W I shall submit to any trial you shall please to make. I shall present your Lordship with a confession of my faith, or take what other way you please to insist on.

B. No, we are not come to that yet.

W I shall desire those severals to be laid together, which I look on as justifying my preaching.

1. I was devoted to the service from mine infancy.

2. I was educated in order thereto at school, and in the University of Oxford.

B. What age are you?

W Twenty-five.

B. No sure, you are not!

W 3. As a son of the prophets, after I had taken my Degree, I preached in the country, being approved of by judicious able Christians, ministers and others.

4. It pleased God to seal my labours with success, in the apparent conversion of many souls.

B. Yea, that is, it may be, to your way.

W Yea, to the power of godliness, from ignorance and profaneness. If it please your Lordship to lay down any evidences of godliness, agreeing with Scripture, and that are not found in those persons intended, I am content to be discharged the ministry. I will stand or fall on the issue thereof.

B. You talk of the power of godliness; such as you fancy.

W Yea, to the reality of religion. Let us appeal to any common-place-book for evidences of graces, and they are found in and upon them.

B. How many are there of them?

W I number not the people.

B. Where are they?

W Wherever I have been called to preach. At Radpole, Melcomb, Turnwood, Whitechurch, and at sea. I shall add another ingredient of my mission.

5. When the church saw the presence of God going along with me, they did, by fasting and prayer, on a day set apart for that end, seek an abundant blessing on my endeavours.

B. A particular church?

W Yes, my Lord, I am not ashamed to own myself a member of one.

B. Why, you may mistake the Apostles' intent. They went about to convert heathens. You have no warrant for your particular churches.

W We have a plain, full and sufficient rule for gospel-worship in the New Testament, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles.

B. We have not.

W. The practice of the Apostles is a standing rule in those cases which were not extraordinary.

B. Not their practice, but their precepts.

W. Both precepts and practice. Our duty is not delivered to us in Scripture only by precepts, but by precedents; by promises, and by threatenings mixed. We are to follow them as they followed Christ.

B. But the Apostle said, "This speak I, not the Lord:" that is, by revelation.

W. Some interpret that place, "This speak I now by revelation from the Lord; not the Lord in that text before instanced concerning divorces." May it please your Lordship, we believe that "*Cultus non institutus, est indebitus*."\*

B. It is false.

W. The second commandment speaks the same. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image."

B. That is, forms of your own invention.

W. Bishop Andrews, taking notice of "*non facias tibi*,"† satisfied me that we may not worship God, but as commanded.

B. Well then you will justify your preaching, will you, without ordination according to law?

W. All these things, laid together, are satisfactory to me, for my procedure therein.

B. They are not enough.

W. There has been more written in proof of preaching of gifted persons, with such approbation, than has been answered yet by any one.

B. Have you any thing more to say to me, Mr. Wesley?

W. Nothing: your Lordship sent for me.

B. I am glad to hear this from your mouth; you will stand to your principles you say?

\* Worship not enjoined, is not binding. † Thou shalt not make to thyself.

W I intend it, through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the King's Majesty, however you deal with me.

B. I will not meddle with you.

W Farewell to you, Sir.

B. Farewell, good Mr. Wesley.

It is to be hoped that the Bishop kept his word. But in the beginning of 1662, Mr. Wesley was seized on the Lord's-day as he was coming out of church, carried to Blandford, and committed to prison. Sir Gerard Napper was one of the most furious of his enemies, and the most forward in committing him; but meeting with an accident by which he broke his collar-bone, he was so far softened, that he sent to some persons to bail Mr. Wesley, and told them, *if they would not, he would do it himself*. How various are the ways by which God brings men to a consciousness of their guilt! Mr. Wesley was thus set at liberty, though bound over to appear at the next Assizes. He appeared accordingly, and came off much better than he expected. On this occasion the good man recorded in his diary the mercy of God to him, in raising up several friends to own him; inclining a solicitor to plead for him; and in restraining the wrath of man, so that the judge, though noted as a passionate man, spoke not an angry word.

Mr. Wesley came joyfully home from the Assizes, and preached constantly every Lord's-day till August 17th, when he delivered his farewell sermon to a weeping audience, from Acts xx, 32: "*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.*" October the 26th, the place was declared vacant by an apparitor, and orders were given to sequester the profits; but his people had given him what was due. On the 22d of February 1663, he quitted Whitchurch, and removed with his family to Melcomb; upon which the corporation there made an order against his settlement, imposing a fine of 20*l*.

upon his landlady, and 5s. per week upon himself, to be levied by distress. These violent proceedings forced him to leave the town, and go to Bridgewater, Ilminster, and Taunton, in which places he met with great kindness and friendship from all the three denominations of Dissenters, and was almost every day employed in preaching in the several places to which he went. At length a gentleman, who had a good house at Preston, two or three miles from Melcomb, gave him free liberty to live in it without paying any rent. Thither he removed his family in the beginning of May, and there he continued while he lived. He records his coming to Preston with great thankfulness. By the Oxford Act he was obliged for a while to withdraw from Preston, and leave his family and people. Upon his coming to the place of his retirement in March 1666, he put this question to himself, "What dost thou here, at such a distance from church, wife, children, &c.?" In his answer, he sets down the oath required by Government, and then adds the reasons why he could not take it, as several ministers had done; and particularly, that to do it, in his own private sense, would be but juggling with God, with the King, and with conscience. After he had lain hid for some time, he ventured home again, and returned to his labour among his people, and occasionally among others. But, notwithstanding all his prudence, he was often disturbed; several times apprehended; and four times imprisoned,—once at Pool for half a year, and once at Dorchester for three months; the other confinements were shorter. He was in many straits and difficulties, but wonderfully supported and comforted, and many times very seasonably and surprisingly delivered. "And having filled up his part of what is behind  
" of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake,  
" which is the Church, and finished the work given him to  
" do, he was taken\* out of this vale of tears to that world  
" where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at

\* I conjecture that he died about the year 1670.

“rest, when he had not been much longer an inhabitant here  
 “below than his blessed Master, whom he served with his  
 “whole heart, according to the best light he had. The vicar  
 “of Preston would not suffer him to be buried in the  
 “Church.”†

SAMUEL ANNESLEY, LL. D., grand-father of the late Mr. Wesley by the mother's side, was born at Killingworth near Warwick, in the year 1620. He was first cousin to the Earl of Anglesey. His grand-mother, an eminently pious woman, dying before his birth, desired that the child, if a boy, might be called Samuel; assigning as the reason of her request, “*I can say, I have asked him of the Lord.*” In his infancy he was strongly impressed with the thoughts of being a minister; and such was his ardour in pursuing this design, that when about five or six years old, he began a practice, which he afterwards continued, of reading twenty chapters every day in the Bible. This practice laid an excellent foundation of useful knowledge, for the future exercise of his ministry.

He lost his father when four years old; but his pious mother took great care of his education; nor did he want the means of obtaining the best instruction, as the paternal estate was considerable. At the age of fifteen he went to the University of Oxford, and took his degrees in the usual course. His piety and diligence at Oxford were so much out of the common way of the place, that he attracted considerable notice. In 1644 he was appointed chaplain in the ship called the *Globe*, under the Earl of Warwick, then Lord High Admiral of England. He went to sea with the fleet, and kept a diary of the voyage. But he soon quitted the sea, and settled at Cliff in Kent. The minister of this place had been turned out for his barefaced encouragement of licentiousness, as Dr. Williams reports, by attending meetings for

† Nonconformists' Memorial, Vol. I. p. 478 to 486.



dancing, drinking, &c. on the Lord's-day. The people on this account were exceedingly fond of him, and greatly prejudiced against his successor, Dr. Annesley, who was a man of a very different character. When he first went among them, they rose upon him with spits, forks, and stones, threatening to destroy him. This was no small trial to a young man of about twenty-five years of age. But he remained firm as a rock in his Master's cause; and as the people were not hardened against the evidence of gospel truth, he had some hopes of doing them good, notwithstanding their profaneness and violence. He therefore told them, that, "Let them use him as they would, he was resolved to continue with them, till God had prepared them by his ministry to entertain a better; and solemnly declared, that when they were so prepared, he would leave the place." His labours were incessant, and the success of his preaching and engaging behaviour was surprising; so that in a few years the people were greatly reformed, and became exceedingly fond of him. Though he enjoyed here an income of four hundred pounds per annum, yet he paid so conscientious a regard to his first declaration, that he thought himself bound to leave them; which he accordingly did, and the people, who at his coming threatened to stone him, now parted from him with cries and tears, thus testifying their affection for him.—It is by no means clear, however, that he acted right in all this. In matters of a mere personal nature we may use much freedom: but where the souls of men are concerned, it is very different.

A very signal providence directed him to a settlement in London in 1652, by the unanimous choice of the inhabitants of the parish of St. John the Apostle. Soon after he was made Lecturer of St. Paul's; and in 1658 Cripplegate was made happy by his settlement there.

He was a man of great uprightness, never regulating his religious profession by his secular interests. He was turned

out of his Lecture, because he would not comply with some things which he deemed extravagant and wrong: he thought conformity in him would be a sin, and he chose to quit a full maintenance rather than injure his conscience. He was acknowledged by all parties to be an Israelite indeed, and yet he suffered much for Nonconformity; but such was then the spirit of party, that an angel from heaven would have been persecuted and abused, if he had appeared as a Dissenter. In his sufferings, God often interposed remarkably for him: One person died, while signing a warrant to apprehend him. He afterwards suffered, because he thought it his duty to bear witness for the old truth against Antinomianism. His integrity made him a stranger to all tricks or little artifices to serve his temporal interest; and his charitable and unsuspecting temper sometimes gave to those who practised them an opportunity to impose upon him.

In ministerial labours he was abundant. Before he was silenced, he often preached three times a day; during the troubles almost every day; afterwards twice every Lord's-day. His sermons were instructive and affecting; and his manner of delivery very peculiarly expressed his heartiness in the things which he spoke.

His care and labour extended to every place where he might be useful. In some measure the care of all the churches was upon him. When any place wanted a minister, he used his endeavours to procure one for them: when any minister was oppressed by poverty, he soon employed himself for his relief. "O! how many places," says Dr. Williams, "had sat in darkness, how many ministers had been starved, if Dr. Annesley had died thirty years since!" He was the chief, often the sole instrument in the education as well as the subsistence of several ministers. The sick, the widows, the orphans, whom he relieved, were innumerable. As a minister, his usefulness was extensive, and God kept him faithful in his work to the last, for which he thus thanked Him on his death-

bed: "Blessed be God, I can say, I have been faithful in the ministry above fifty-five years." Many called him FATHER, as the instrument of their conversion; and many called him a COMFORTER.

He had uninterrupted peace, and assurance of God's love and favour, for above thirty years of the latter part of his life. This assurance had not one cloud in all his last sickness. A little before his departure, his desire of death appeared strong, and his soul was filled with the foretaste of glory. He often said, "Come, my dearest Jesus! the nearer the more precious, the more welcome." Another time his joy was so great, that in an extacy he cried out, "I cannot contain it: what manner of love is this to a poor worm? I cannot express the thousandth part of what praise is due to Thee! We know not what we do when we offer at praising God for his mercies. It is but little I can give thee; but, Lord, help me to give thee my all! I will die praising thee, and rejoice that others can praise thee better. I shall be satisfied with thy likeness; satisfied! satisfied! Oh! my dearest Jesus, I come!" Thus departed this excellent man, December 31, 1696, in the 77th year of his age; leaving us an example how to live and how to die.

## CHAPTER II.

SAMUEL WESLEY, SENIOR.

MR. JOHN WESLEY, of whom I have spoken above, left two sons, Matthew and Samuel. Matthew, following the example of his grand-father, studied physic, and made a fortune by his practice.\* Samuel, the father of the late Mr. John Wesley, was born about the year 1662, or perhaps a little earlier; but he could not, I think, have been more than eight or nine years old when his father died. The first thing that shook his attachment to the Dissenters was, a defence of the death of King Charles the First; and, afterwards, the proceedings of the Calf's Head Club.† These things shocked him: and though it is certain, that many of the Dissenters disapproved of the King's death, and that the proceedings of a Club ought not to be attributed to a large body of men, who had no connection with the members of it, and differed greatly in opinion from them; yet they had such an effect upon his mind, that he separated himself from the Dissenting interest while yet a boy,—as appears from the following lines in his son's elegy upon him:

With op'ning life his early worth began;  
The boy misleads not, but foreshews the man.  
Directed wrong, though first he miss'd the way,  
Train'd to mistake, and disciplin'd to stray:  
Not long—for reason gilded error's night,  
And doubts well-founded shot a gleam of light.

\* I shall afterwards insert some fine Verses on the death of this gentleman, by his niece, Mrs. Wright.

† Notes of Samuel Wesley to his Elegy on his Father.

He spent some time at a private academy, before he went to the University; but where, it is not said. About the age of sixteen\* he walked to Oxford, and entered himself of Exeter College. He had now only two pounds sixteen shillings; and no prospect of future supplies, but from his own exertions. By assisting the younger students, and instructing any who chose to employ him, he supported himself till he took his Bachelor's degree, without any preferment, or assistance from his friends, except five shillings. This circumstance does him great honour, and shews him to have been a young man of wonderful diligence and resolution. He then went to London, having increased his little stock to Ten Pounds Fifteen Shillings. He was there ordained Deacon, and obtained a curacy, which he held one year, when he was appointed chaplain on board the fleet. This situation he held one year only, and then returned to London, and served a cure for two years. During this time he married, and his wife brought him a son. In this period he wrote several pieces, which brought him into notice and esteem, and a small living was given him in the country. He was soon after strongly solicited by the friends of King James II. to support the measures of the Court in favour of Popery, with promises of preferment if he would comply with the King's desire. But he absolutely refused to read the King's *Declaration*; and though surrounded with courtiers, soldiers, and informers, he preached a bold and pointed discourse against it, from Daniel iii, 17, 18.—“*If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known*

\* Mr. Southey disputes this, and brings forward extracts from the Registers of Exeter College to prove, that he must have been “two-and-twenty.” But, as the name is spelt Westley, in those entries, and in the *person's own* signature, it is more reasonable to suppose it was another person, than that his son, who says he was but sixteen, was mistaken.

*unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."* His son Samnel describes this circumstance in the following lines :

When zealous James, unhappy, sought the way  
To' establish Rome by arbitrary sway ;  
In vain were bribes shower'd by the guilty crown,  
He sought no favour, as he fear'd no frown.  
Secure in faith, exempt from worldly views,  
He dar'd the *Declaration* to refuse :  
Then from the sacred pulpit boldly shew'd  
The dauntless Hebrews, true to Israel's God,  
Who spake, regardless of their King's commands,  
" The God we serve can save us from thy hands ;  
" If not, O Monarch, know we choose to die,  
" Thy gods alike and threat'nings we defy ;  
" No power on earth our faith has e'er controll'd,  
" We scorn to worship idols, though of gold."  
Resistless truth damp'd all the audience round,  
The base informer sicken'd at the sound ;  
Attentive courtiers conscious stood amaz'd,  
And soldiers silent trembled as they gaz'd.  
No smallest murmur of distaste arose,  
Abash'd and vanquish'd seem'd the Church's foes.  
So, when like zeal their bosoms did inspire,  
The Jewish martyrs walk'd unhurt in fire.

In this instance of integrity and firmness of mind, Mr. Wesley has given us an unequivocal proof, that a person of High Church principles may be a true friend to the Protestant cause, and the liberty of the subject. It is evident, that he as much disliked the arbitrary proceedings of King James, as the religion which he endeavoured to introduce. When the Revolution took place in 1688, Mr. Wesley most cordially approved of it, and was the first who wrote in its defence. This work he dedicated to Queen Mary,\* who, in consequence of it, gave him the living of Epworth in Lincolnshire, about the year 1693 ; and in 1723 he was presented to

\* MSS. Papers.

the living of Wroote, in the same country, in addition to Epworth.

Mr. Wesley held the living of Epworth upwards of forty years. His abilities would have done him credit in a more conspicuous situation; and had Queen Mary lived much longer, it is probable that he would not have spent so great a part of his life in such an obscure corner of the kingdom. In the beginning of the year 1705, he printed a poem on the Battle of Blenheim, with which the Duke of Marlborough was so well pleased, that he made him chaplain to Colonel Lepelle's regiment, which was to stay in England some time. In consequence of the same poem, a noble Lord sent for him to London, promising to procure him a Prebend. But, unhappily, he was at this time engaged in a controversy with the Dissenters, who, in the first part of Queen Anne's reign, had a very powerful influence in both Houses of Parliament, and at Court; and were then preparing to present a petition to the House of Lords, praying for justice against the authors of several pamphlets written in opposition to them, and against Mr. Wesley in particular: but they were dissuaded from taking this step by two members of that House. They had, however, interest enough to hinder Mr. Wesley from obtaining a prebend's stall; and they soon also worked him out of the chaplainship of the regiment, and brought several other very severe sufferings upon him and his family.

I believe it was at this time, while residing in London, as Mr. J. Wesley informed me, that he happened to go into a coffee-house to obtain some refreshment. There were some gentlemen in a box at the other end of the room; one of whom, an officer of the Guards, swore dreadfully. Mr. Wesley saw that he could not speak to him without much difficulty; he therefore desired the waiter to bring him a glass of water. When it was brought, he said aloud, "Carry it to that gen-

tleman in the red coat, and desire him to wash his mouth after his oaths." The officer rose up in a fury ; but the gentlemen in the box laid hold of him, one of them crying out, " Nay, Colonel ! you gave the first offence. You see the gentleman is a clergyman. You know it is an affront to swear in his presence." The officer was thus restrained, and Mr. Wesley departed.

Some years afterwards, being again in London, and walking in St. James's Park, a gentleman joined him, who, after some conversation, enquired if he recollected having seen him before ? Mr. Wesley replied in the negative. The gentleman then recalled to his remembrance the scene at the coffee-house, and added, " Since that time, Sir, I thank God, I have feared an oath, and every thing that is offensive to the Divine Majesty ; and as I have a perfect recollection of you, I rejoiced at seeing you, and could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to God and you."—" *A word spoken in season, how good is it !*"

As a Pastor, he was indefatigable in the duties of his office : a constant preacher ; diligent in visiting the sick, and administering such advice as their situations required ; and attentive to the conduct of all who were under his care, so that every one in his parish became an object of his attention and concern. No strangers could settle there, but he presently knew it, and made himself acquainted with them. We have a proof of this from a letter he wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln, after being absent from home a very short time. \* " After my return to Epworth," says he, " and looking a little among my people, I found there were two strangers come hither, both of whom I have discovered to be Papists, though they come to church ; and I have hopes of making one or both of them good members of the Church of England."

\* Mr. C. Wesley's Papers.



But this conscientious regard to parochial duties, did not divert him from literary pursuits. His favourite study seems to have been the original scriptures, in which he was indefatigable; a practice which must be commended in a minister of the Gospel, when joined with a proper attention to practical duties.

The following extracts from two of his letters to his son, the late Mr. John Wesley, will give some idea of his diligence in this respect; and the second of them will shew us his opinion of a subject on which learned men have been much divided:

“ JANUARY 26, 1725.

“ I have some time since designed an edition of the Holy Bible in octavo, in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Septuagint, and the Vulgate; and have made some progress in it. What I desire of you on this article is,—1. That you would immediately fall to work, and read diligently the Hebrew text in the Polyglott, and collate it exactly with the Vulgate, writing all, even the least variations or differences between them.—2. To these I would have you add the Samaritan text in the last column but one; which is the very same with the Hebrew, except in some very few places, differing only in the Samaritan character, which I think is the true old Hebrew. In twelve months time, you will get through the Pentateuch; for I have done it four times the last year, and am going over it the fifth, and collating the two Greek versions, the Alexandrian and the Vatican, with what I can get of Symmachus and Theodotion,” &c.

Mr. John Wesley was in the twenty-second year of his age, not yet ordained, nor had he attained any preferment in the University, when he received this letter from his father. It gives a pleasing view of his progress in biblical learning at his early period of life, and shews his father's confidence

in his critical knowledge of the Hebrew scriptures. The second letter was written in 1731, and very clearly states the old gentleman's opinion of the translation of the Seventy, after a most laborious examination of it.

“ I find in your letter an account of a learned friend you have, who has a great veneration for the Septuagint, and thinks that in some instances it corrects the present Hebrew. I do not wonder that he is of that mind; as it is likely he has read Vossius and other learned men, who magnify this translation so as to depreciate the original. When I first began to study the Scriptures in earnest, and had read it over several times, I was inclined to the same opinion. What then increased my respect for it was—1. That I thought I found many texts in the Scriptures more happily explained than in our own or other versions. 2. That many words and phrases in the New Testament, can hardly be so well understood without having recourse to this translation. 3. That both our Saviour and his Apostles so frequently quote it. These considerations held me in a blind admiration of the Septuagint; and though I did not esteem them absolutely infallible, yet I hardly dared to trust my own eyes, or think they were frequently mistaken. But upon reading this translation over very often, and comparing it verbatim with the Hebrew, I was forced by plain evidence of fact to be of another mind. That which led me to it was, some mistakes, (I think not less than a thousand,) in places indifferent, either occasioned by the ambiguous sense of some Hebrew words, or by the mistake of some letters, as *Daleth* for *Resh*, and *vice versa*; which, every one knows, are very much alike in the old Hebrew character. But what fully determined my judgment, was, that I found, or thought I found, very many places which appeared purposely altered for no very justifiable reason. These at last came so thick upon me, in my daily reading, that I began to note them down; not a few instances of which you will see in the Dissertation I shall send you in

my next packet. I would have you communicate it to your learned friend, with my compliments, earnestly desiring him, as well as you, to peruse it with the greatest prejudice you can ; and after you have thoroughly weighed the whole, as I think the subject deserves, to make the strongest objections you are able against any article of it, where you are not convinced by my observations. For I should not deserve a friend, if I did not esteem those my best friends who do their endeavours to set me right, where I may possibly be mistaken, especially in a matter of great moment."

Mr. Wesley was a voluminous writer. His Latin Commentary on the book of Job is a most elaborate performance ; but the subject of this book, and the language in which the commentary is written, are but ill adapted to the generality of modern readers. As a poet, he has been censured by Garth and others ; though when he failed, it was, perhaps, as much owing to the difficulty of the subject, as to a want of poetical abilities. In an early edition of the Dunciad, he and Dr. Watts were associated together, and involved in the same censure. But it is well known, that the earlier editions of this poem were all surreptitious, in which the blanks were filled up by the mere caprice or envy of the editors, without any regard to the intention of the author. Thus, in a surreptitious edition printed in Ireland, the blank in the 104th verse of the first book was filled up with Dryden instead of Dennis, which, no doubt, was far enough from the intention of Mr. Pope. With the same *propriety* and *good judgment*, in the surreptitious editions, the names Wesley and Watts were inserted thus, W——ly, W——s, in the 126th line of the same book ; but they never appeared in any edition published by Mr. Pope. The lines originally stood thus :

A Gothic Vatican ! of Greece and Rome,  
Well purg'd, and worthy Withers, Quarles, and Broome.

In a London edition of the *Dunciad*, printed in 1729, there is the following note on the last of these lines, “It was printed in the surreptitious editions W——ly, W——s, who were persons eminent for good life; the one writ the *Life of Christ* in verse, the other some valuable pieces of the lyric kind, on pious subjects. The line is here restored according to its original.”

Of Mr Wesley’s larger poetical performances, his son Samuel passes the following candid and impartial judgment, in the elegy above-mentioned :

Whate’er his strains, still glorious was his end,  
Faith to assert and virtue to defend.  
He sung how God the Saviour deign’d t’ expire,  
With Vida’s piety, though not his fire ;  
Deduc’d his Maker’s praise from age to age,  
Through the long annals of the sacred page.

Most of his smaller pieces are excellent. I shall insert the following, both for its intrinsic beauty, and as a specimen of his poetical talents.

## EUPOLIS’ HYMN TO THE CREATOR.

### THE OCCASION.

*Part of a (new) dialogue between PLATO and EUPOLIS\* the Poet.  
The rest not extant.*

EUPOLIS.—But is it not a little hard, that you should banish all our fraternity from your new Commonwealth? What hurt has father Homer done, that you dismiss him among the rest?

\* EUPOLIS was an Athenian. He is mentioned several times by Horace, and once by Persius; and was in high estimation at Athens for his poetical compositions, though he severely lashed the vices of the age he lived in. He was killed in an engagement at sea between the Athenians and Lacedemonians, and his death was so much lamented at Athens, that they made a law, that no poet should go to battle. He lived about 400 years before Christ.

PLATO.—Certainly, the blind old gentleman *lies* with the best grace in the world. But a lie, handsomely told, debauches the taste and morals of a people. Besides, his tales of the gods are intolerable, and derogate in the highest degree from the dignity of the Divine Nature.

EUPOLIS.—But do you really think that those faults are inseparable from poetry? May not the ONE SUPREME be sung, without any intermixture of them?

PLATO.—I must own, I hardly ever saw any thing of that nature. But I shall be glad to see you, or any other, attempt and succeed in it. On that condition, I will gladly exempt you from the fate of your brother poets.

EUPOLIS.—I am far from pretending to be a standard. But I will do the best I can.

### THE HYMN.\*

AUTHOR of Being, Source of light,  
 With unfading beauties bright,  
 Fulness, goodness, rolling round  
 Thy own fair orb without a bound ;  
 Whether thee thy suppliants call  
 Truth or Good, or One, or All,  
*Ei* or *Jao* ; thee we hail  
 Essence that can never fail,  
 Grecian or Barbaric name,  
 Thy steadfast being still the same.

Thee, when morning greets the skies  
 With rosy cheeks and humid eyes ;  
 Thee, when sweet declining day  
 Sinks in purple waves away ;

\* It has been disputed whether Mr. Wesley, or his daughter, Mrs. *Wright*, (of whom I shall speak hereafter,) was the writer of this poem. This dispute is of a very recent date, and does not appear to have any real foundation. Many years ago, the Critical Reviewers inserted some sarcasms against the poetry of the Methodists. Mr. John Wesley replied, and sent this poem to them as a specimen. The Reviewers so far did honour to the specimen, as to insert it at large in their next number. Mr. Wesley always declared that it was written by his father.

Thee will I sing, O parent Jove,  
And teach the world to praise and love.

Yonder azure vault on high,  
Yonder blue, low, liquid sky,  
Earth, on its firm basis plac'd,  
And with circling waves embrac'd,  
All creating power confess,  
All their mighty Maker bless.  
Thou shak'st all nature with thy nod,  
Sea, earth, and air, confess the God :  
Yet does thy powerful hand sustain  
Both earth and heav'n, both firm and main.  
Scarce can our daring thought arise  
To thy pavilion in the skies ;  
Nor can Plato's self declare  
The bliss, the joy, the rapture there.  
Barren above thou dost not reign,  
But circled with a glorious train :  
The sons of God, the sons of light,  
Ever joying in thy sight :  
(For thee their silver harps are strung,)  
Ever beauteous, ever young,  
Angelic forms their voices raise,  
And through heaven's arch resound thy praise.

The feather'd souls that swim the air,  
And bathe in liquid ether there,  
The lark, precentor of the choir,  
Leading them higher still and higher,  
Listen and learn ; th' angelic notes  
Repeating in their warbling throats ;  
And ere to soft repose they go,  
Teach them to their lords below :  
On the green turf their mossy nest,  
The ev'ning anthem swells their breast.  
Thus like thy golden chain from high,  
Thy praise unites the earth and sky.

Source of light, thou bid'st the sun  
On his burning axles run ;  
The stars like dust around him fly,  
And strew the area of the sky.  
He drives so swift his race above,  
Mortals can't perceive him move ;

So smooth his course, oblique or straight,  
 Olympus shakes not with his weight.  
 As the Queen of solemn Night  
 Fills at his vase her orbs of light,  
 Imparted lustre ; thus we see  
 The solar virtue shines by thee.

Eiresione,\* we'll no more  
 Imaginary power adore ;  
 Since oil, and wool, and cheerful wine,  
 And life-sustaining bread, are thine.

Thy herbage, O great Pan, sustains  
 The flocks that graze our Attic plains ;  
 The olive, with fresh verdure crown'd,  
 Rises pregnant from the ground ;  
 At thy command it shoots and springs,  
 And a thousand blessings brings.  
 Minerva only is thy mind,  
 Wisdom and bounty to mankind.  
 The fragrant thyme, the bloomy rose,  
 Herb and flower, and shrub that grows  
 On Thessalian Tempe's plain,  
 Or where the rich Sabeans reign,  
 That treat the taste, or smell, or sight,  
 For food, or med'cine, or delight,  
 Planted by thy parent care,  
 Spring and smile and flourish there.

O ye nurses of soft dreams,  
 Reedy brooks and winding streams,  
 Or murmuring o'er the pebbles sheen,  
 Or sliding through the meadows green,  
 Or where through matted sedge you creep,  
 Trav'ling to your parent deep :  
 Sound His praise by whom you rose,  
 That Sea which neither ebbs nor flows.

O ye immortal woods and groves,  
 Which th' enamour'd student loves ;

\* This word signifies a kind of garland composed of a branch of olive, wrapped about with wool, and loaded with all kinds of fruits of the earth, as a token of peace and plenty. The poet says, he will no more worship the *imaginary* power, supposed to be the giver of these things ; but the great Pan, the Creator, from whom they all proceed.

Beneath whose venerable shade,  
 For thought and friendly converse made,  
 I am'd Hecadæm, old hero lies,  
 Whose shrine is shaded from the skies,  
 And through the gloom of silent night  
 Projects from far its trembling light ;  
 You, whose roots descend as low,  
 As high in air your branches grow ;  
 Your leafy arms to heav'n extend,  
 Bend your heads, in homage bend ;  
 Cedars and pines that wave above,  
 And the oak belov'd of Jove.

Omen, monster, prodigy,  
 Or nothing are, or, Jove. from thee !  
 Whether varied nature play,  
 Or re-invers'd thy will obey,  
 And to rebel man declare  
 Famine, plague, or wasteful war.  
 Laugh, ye profane, who dare despise  
 The threat'ning vengeance of the skies.  
 Whilst the pious, on his guard,  
 Undismay'd, is still prepar'd :  
 Life or death, his mind's at rest,  
 Since what thou send'st must needs be best.

No evil can from thee proceed :  
 'Tis only suffer'd, not decreed.  
 Darkness is not from the sun,  
 Nor mount the shades till he is gone :  
 Then does night obscene arise  
 From Erebus, and fill the skies ;  
 Fantastic forms the air invade,  
 Daughters of nothing and of shade.

Can we forget thy guardian care,  
 Slow to punish, prone to spare ?  
 Thou brak'st the haughty Persian's pride,  
 That dar'd old ocean's power deride ;  
 Their shipwrecks strew'd the Eubœan wave,  
 At Marathon they found a grave.  
 O ye blest Greeks, who there expir'd  
 For Greece, with pious ardour fir'd !  
 What shrines or altars shall we raise  
 To secure your endless praise ?



Or need we monuments supply,  
To rescue what can never die?

And yet a greater Hero far  
(Unless great Socrates could err,)  
Shall rise to bless some future day,  
And teach to live, and teach to pray.  
Come, unknown instructor, come!  
Our leaping hearts shall make thee room:  
Thou with Jove our vows shalt share,  
Of Jove and Thee we are the care.

O Father, King, whose heavenly face  
Shines serene on all thy race,  
We thy magnificence adore,  
And thy well-known aid implore;  
Nor vainly for thy help we call;  
Nor can we want—for thou art all.

This hymn may throw light on that passage of St. Paul, respecting the heathen, Rom. i. 21. &c. “*When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.—Wherefore God gave them up,*” &c. Their polytheism was a punishment consequent upon their apostacy from the true God.

Every good judge will readily allow that the author of these verses did not want talents for poetry. But wherever we fix his standing in the scale of learning and abilities, he still rises higher by genuine piety, and a firm attachment to justice, mercy and truth, in various trying situations of life. His integrity was conspicuous, and his conduct uniform. As he had chosen God and his service for his own portion, he also chose the same for his children. When two of his sons, as we shall see, were pursuing a course of piety at Oxford, which threw their future prospects of preferment into a cloud not likely to be dissipated, he encouraged them in it, choosing rather that *he and his children should suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.* Few men have been so diligent in the pastoral office as he

was; none perhaps more so. Though his income may be called small, and his family large, he had still something to give to those in distress. In conversation he was grave, yet instructive, lively, and full of anecdote; and this talent the late Mr John Wesley possessed in a high degree. His last moments were as conspicuous for resignation and christian fortitude, as his life had been for zeal and diligence. His two sons, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, were both with him when he died, and the latter has given the following interesting account of his death, in a letter to his brother Samuel, dated April 30, 1735.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“After all your desire of seeing my father alive, you are at last assured you must see his face no more till he is raised in incorruption. You have reason to envy us who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were, ‘Nothing is too much to suffer for heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death; to-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the cup of blessing, before we drink it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I die.’ The morning he was to communicate, he was so exceeding weak and full of pain, that he could not without the utmost difficulty receive the elements, often repeating, ‘Thou shakest me, thou shakest me;’ but immediately after receiving, there followed the most visible alteration. He appeared full of faith and peace, which extended even to his body; for he was so much better, that we almost hoped he would have recovered. The fear of death he entirely conquered, and at last gave up his latest human desires—of finishing Job, paying his debts, and seeing you. He often laid

his hand upon my head, and said, ‘Be steady! The Christian Faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not.’ To my sister Emily he said, ‘Do not be concerned at my death: God will then begin to manifest himself to my family.’ When we were met about him, his usual expression was, ‘Now let me hear you talk of heaven.’ On my asking him whether he did not find himself worse, he replied, ‘O my Charles, I feel a great deal; God chastens me with strong pain, but I praise him for it, I thank him for it, I love him for it.’ On the 25th his voice failed him, and nature seemed entirely spent, when, on my brother’s asking, whether he was not near heaven, he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in sounds, ‘Yes, I am.’ He spoke once more, just after my brother had used the commendatory prayer; his last words were, ‘Now you have done all!’ This was about half an hour after six, from which time till sun-set, he made signs of offering up himself, till my brother again having used the commendatory prayer, the very moment it was finished, he expired. His passage was so smooth and insensible, that notwithstanding the stopping of his pulse, and ceasing of all sign of life and motion, we continued over him a considerable time, in doubt whether the soul was departed or no. My mother, who, for several days before he died, hardly ever went into his chamber but she was carried out again in a fit, was far less shocked at the news than we expected, and told us that now she was heard, in his having so easy a death, and in her being strengthened so to bear it.”

It seems he received “*the witness of the Spirit*,” (which it is almost certain he never *believed for* till then,) in this holy ordinance, and the *fruit* evidently followed. He might have received it, as a penitent sinner, “*believing in the Son of God, who was made sin for him*,” before he attempted to teach others. But such was not the creed of that day. This good man, therefore, like his excellent partner, laboured in the fear of

God, “through a long legal night of nearly seventy years.” It is remarkable also, that it was in the Lord’s Supper that the *Divine Witness* was given to both, as we shall see by comparing this account with that to be hereafter given of Mrs. S. Wesley.

It should not be omitted that the famous speech which was delivered in the House of Lords by Dr. Sacheverel, in the reign of Queen Anne, was composed by Mr. Samuel Wesley, as his son Mr. John Wesley informs us, in his *History of England*.

We have thus seen two ministers of the Gospel die; the one a Nonconformist, and the other a High Churchman. As they approach eternity, we see them dropping their singularities of opinion, and co-alescing, and becoming one in Christ Jesus. Animated with the same spirit of devotion, they look up to God as their common Father, through the same Mediator and Saviour; they praise him for the same mercies; and, looking forward to his kingdom and glory with the same humble confidence, both triumph over death.—They give satisfactory evidence, that they were united to Christ, belonged to the same family, and were heirs of the same heavenly inheritance, notwithstanding the external differences in their mode of worship. These considerations should teach us to be careful, not to overvalue those things wherein they differed, nor to exalt the discriminating distinctions of parties into the rank of fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

### CHAPTER III.

#### MRS. SUSANNAH WESLEY, AND HER DAUGHTERS.

Mrs. SUSANNAH WESLEY, the Mother of the late Mr. John Wesley, was the youngest daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, and a few years younger than her husband. Being educated in a truly religious family, she early imbibed a reverence for religion. Before she was thirteen years old, she had examined the whole controversy between the Dissenters and the Established Church, and from that time became a member of the Church of England. She afterwards examined the evidences of natural and revealed religion with scrupulous attention, and under every article set down the reasons which determined her to believe it. Of these things she speaks thus, in a letter to her son, Samuel Wesley, dated October 11th, 1709.

“ There is nothing I now desire to live for, but to do some small service to my children; that, as I have brought them into the world, I may, if it please God, be an instrument of doing good to their souls. I had been several years collecting from my little reading, but chiefly from my own observation and experience, some things which I hoped might be useful to you all. I had begun to correct and form all into a little manual; wherein I designed you should have seen what were the particular reasons which prevailed on me to believe the being of a God, and the grounds of natural\* religion, together with the motives that induced me to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ; under which was comprehended my own pri-

\* I believe there never was any such thing in the world, excepting only as it may mean that which was *not written*.

write reasons for the truth of revealed religion. And because I was educated among the Dissenters, and there was something remarkable in my leaving them at so early an age, not being full thirteen, I had drawn up an account of the whole transaction, under which I had included the main of the controversy between them and the Established Church, as far as it had come to my knowledge; and then followed the reasons which had determined my judgment to the preference of the Church of England. I had fairly transcribed a great part of it, when you, writing to me for some directions about receiving the sacrament, I began a short discourse on that subject, intending to send them all together; but before I could finish my design, the flames consumed both this and all my other writings.\* I would have you, at your leisure, begin to do something like this for yourself, and write down what are the principles on which you build your faith; and though I cannot possibly recover all I formerly wrote, yet I will gladly assist you what I can, in explaining any difficulty that may occur.

In one of her private meditations, she reckons the following among the signal mercies which God had bestowed upon her. “Born in a Christian country: early initiated and instructed in the first principles of the christian religion: good examples in parents and several of the family: good books and ingenious conversation: preserved from ill accidents, once from a violent death: married to a religious orthodox man; by him first drawn off from the Socinian heresy, and afterwards confirmed and strengthened by Bishop Bull.†”

About the year 1700, she made a resolution to spend one hour morning and evening in private devotion, in prayer and meditation; and she religiously kept it ever after, unless

\* When their house was burnt down, in February, 1709.

† In the manuscript it stands thus, B. B. which I believe is intended for Bishop Bull.

sickness hindered, or some absolutely necessary business of her family obliged her to shorten the time. If opportunity offered, she spent some time at noon in this religious and profitable employment.\* She generally wrote down her thoughts on different subjects at these times; and great numbers of her meditations have been preserved in her own handwriting. I shall select a few, and make some extracts from others; because they shew us this excellent woman in her most private retirement, conversing without disguise with Him who knows the heart.

“NOON.—To know God only as a philosopher; to have the most sublime and curious speculations concerning his essence, attributes, and providence; to be able to demonstrate his Being from all or any of the works of nature, and to discourse with the greatest propriety and eloquence of his existence and operations; will avail us nothing, unless at the same time we know him experimentally; unless the heart know him to be its Supreme Good, its only happiness; unless a man feel and acknowledge that he can find no repose, no peace, no joy, but in loving and being beloved by him, and does accordingly rest in him as the centre of his being, the fountain of his pleasures, the origin of all virtue and goodness, his light, his life, his strength, his all; in a word, his Lord, his God. Thus let me ever know thee, O God!”

“EVENING. The mind of man is naturally so corrupted, and all the powers thereof so weakened, that we cannot possibly aspire vigorously towards God, or have any clear perception of spiritual things, without his assistance. Nothing less than the same Almighty power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, can raise our souls from the death of sin to a life of holiness.—To know God experimentally is altogether supernatural, and what we can never attain to, but by the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ.\* By virtue of what

\* Though this pious woman could write thus clearly, she did not attain this true Christian faith till many years after.

he has done and suffered, and is now doing in heaven for us, we obtain the Holy Spirit, who is the best instructor, the most powerful teacher we can possibly have; without whose agency, all other means of grace would be ineffectual.—How evidently does the Holy Spirit concur with the means of grace! And how certainly does he assist and strengthen the soul, if it be but sincere and hearty in its endeavours to avoid any evil, or perform any good!—To have a good desire, a fervent aspiration towards God, shall not pass unregarded. I have found by long experience, that it is of great use to accustom one's self to enter into solemn engagements with God against any particular sin; but then I would have them never made for a longer time, than from morning till night, and from night till morning, that so the impression they make on the mind may be always fresh and lively. This was many years tried with good success, in the case of —. Glory be to thee, O Lord!”

“MORNING. It is too common with me upon receiving any light, or new supply of grace, to think, Now I have gained my point, and may say, ‘Soul, take thine ease;’ by which means I think not of going any further; or else fall into dejection of spirit, upon a groundless fear, that I shall soon lose what I have gained, and in a little time be never the better for it. Both these are sins. The first proceeds from immoderate love of present ease, and spiritual sloth: the other from want of faith in the all-sufficiency of my Saviour.

“EVENING. If to esteem and to have the highest reverence for Thee; if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge Thee, the supreme, the only desirable good, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!

“If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains, which is esteemed great, fair, or good; if earnestly and constantly to desire Thee, thy favour, thy acceptance,



Thyself, rather than any or all things thou hast created, be to love Thee, I do love Thee !

“ If to rejoice in thy essential majesty and glory ; if to feel a vital joy o’erspread and cheer the heart at each perception of thy blessedness, at every thought that thou art God ; that all things are in thy power ; that there is none superior or equal to Thee—be to love Thee, I do love Thee !”

Though Mrs. Wesley allotted two hours in the day for meditation and prayer in private, no woman was ever more diligent in business, or attentive to family affairs, than she was. Remarkable for method and good arrangement both in her studies and business, she saved much time, and kept her mind free from perplexity. She had nineteen children, ten of whom, at least, grew up to be educated ; and this duty fell upon her ; and it was almost impossible for the children to have had a better instructor. From several things which appear in her papers, it seems to me that she had acquired some knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages in her youth, though she never makes any pretensions to it. She had studied human nature well, and knew how to adapt her discourse either to youth or age ; and without this, no person is properly qualified to instruct others. Her children were very early taught obedience to their parents, and to wait their decision in every thing they were to have or do. As soon as they could speak, they were taught the Lord’s prayer, and made to repeat it at rising and bed-time constantly. As they advanced, they were taught a short prayer for their parents, and some collects ; a short catechism ; and some portion of scripture, as their memories could bear. They were early made to distinguish the sabbath from other days ; and were soon taught to be still at family-prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs before they could kneel or speak. Her method of teaching them to read was, I think, peculiar to herself, and deserves to be no-

ticed. I shall give it in her own words, in a letter to Mr. John Wesley. "None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was over-ruled; and she was more years in learning, than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: The day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were our school-hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters; and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought them very dull: But the reason why I thought them so was, because the rest learned them so readily, and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learnt the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the 10th of February; the next day he began to learn, and as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over till he could read it off hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, &c., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory, that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learnt in his lesson, he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learnt very soon to read an English author well.

"The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters, they were first put to spell, and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading at school-time without any intermission; and before we left school, each child read what he had learnt that morning;

and ere we parted in the afternoon, what they had learned that day."

Mr. Wesley observes of his mother, that even she, as well as her father and grand-father, her husband and three sons, had been, in her measure, a Preacher of righteousness. As this is a remarkable circumstance in her life, and shews her zeal and steadiness in doing good, I shall relate it a little more at large than Mr. Wesley has done, the original letters being now before me.

Her husband usually attended the sittings of the *Convocation* ; and on these occasions was obliged to reside in London for a length of time that was often injurious to his parish, and at an expence that was inconvenient to himself and family. It was on this business, I apprehend, that he spent so much time in London in the beginning of the year 1712. During his absence, Mrs. Wesley formed a little meeting at her house on a Sunday evening, when she read a sermon, prayed, and conversed with the people who came for this purpose. She acquainted her husband of their meeting, who, on account of the novelty and singularity of the thing, made some objections against it. Her answer is dated the 6th of February, 1712, in which she says, "I heartily thank you for dealing so plainly and faithfully with me in a matter of no common concern. The main of your objections against our Sunday-evening meetings, are, first, that it will look particular ; secondly, my sex ; and, lastly, your being at present in a public station and character ; to all which I shall answer briefly.

"As to its looking particular, I grant it does; and so does almost every thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit, or in the way of common conversation: because, in our corrupt age, the utmost care and diligence have been used to banish all discourse of God or spiritual concerns out of society ; as if religion were never to

appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of professing ourselves to be Christians.

“ To your second, I reply, that, as I am a woman, so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it lies upon you, as head of the family, and as their minister, yet, in your absence, I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my care, as a talent committed to me under a trust by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth ; and if I am unfaithful to Him or to you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto Him, when he shall command me to render an account of my stewardship ?

“ As these, and other such like thoughts, made me at first take a more than ordinary care of the souls of my children and servants ; so, knowing that our most holy religion requires a strict observation of the Lord’s day, and not thinking that we fully answered the end of the institution by only going to church, but that likewise we were obliged to fill up the intermediate spaces of that sacred time by other acts of piety and devotion, I thought it my duty to spend some part of the day in reading to, and instructing my family ; especially in your absence, when, having no afternoon service, we have so much leisure for such exercises ; and such time I esteemed spent in a way more acceptable to God, than if I had retired to my own private devotions.

“ This was the beginning of my present practice : other people’s coming in and joining with us, was purely accidental. Our lad told his parents ; they first desired to be admitted ; then others who heard of it, begged leave also ; so our company increased to about thirty, and seldom exceeded forty last winter ; and why it increased since, I leave you to judge, after you have read what follows.

“ Soon after you went to London, Emily found in your study the account of the Danish Missionaries ; which, having

never seen, I ordered her to read to me. I was never, I think, more affected with any thing than with the relation of their travels; and was exceedingly pleased with the noble design they were engaged in. Their labours refreshed my soul beyond measure, and I could not forbear spending a good part of that evening in praising and adoring the Divine Goodness for inspiring those good men with such an ardent zeal for his glory; that they were willing to hazard their lives, and all that is esteemed dear to men in this world, to advance the honour of their Master Jesus! For several days, I could think or speak of little else. At last, it came into my mind: Though I am not a man, nor a minister of the Gospel, and so cannot be engaged in such a worthy employment as they were; yet, if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and if I were inspired with a true zeal for his glory, and did really desire the salvation of souls, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought I might live in a more exemplary manner in *some* things; I might pray more for the people, and speak with more warmth to those with whom I have an opportunity of conversing. However, I resolved to begin with my own children; and accordingly I proposed and observed the following method: I take such a proportion of time as I can best spare every night, to discourse with each child by itself, on something that relates to its principal concerns. On Monday, I talk with Molly; on Tuesday, with Hetty; Wednesday, with Nancy; Thursday, with Jacky; Friday, with Patty; Saturday, with Charles; and with Emily and Suky together on Sunday.

“With those few neighbours who then came to me, I discoursed more freely and affectionately than before; I chose the best and most awakening sermons we had; and I spent more time with them in such exercises. Since this, our company has increased every night; for I dare deny none who ask admittance. Last Sunday, I believe we had above Two Hundred, and yet many went away for want of room.

“ But I never durst positively presume to hope, that God would make use of me as an instrument of doing good : The furthest I ever durst go, was, It may be ; who can tell ? With God all things are possible. I will resign myself to Him : or, as Herbert better expresses it,

Only, since God doth often make  
Of lowly matter, for high uses meet,  
I throw me at his feet ;  
There will I lie, until my Maker seek  
For some mean stuff, whereon to shew his skill,  
Then is my time ——

And thus I rested, without passing any reflection on myself, or forming any judgment about the success or event of this undertaking.

“ Your third objection I leave to be answered by your own judgment. We meet not upon any worldly design. We banish all temporal concerns from our society ; none is suffered to mingle any discourse about them with our reading or singing. We keep close to the business of the day ; and as soon as it is over, they all go home. And where is the harm of this ? If I and my children went a visiting on Sunday nights, or if we admitted of impertinent visits, as too many do who think themselves good Christians, perhaps it would be thought no scandalous practice, though in truth it would be so ; therefore, why should any reflect upon you, let your station be what it will, because your wife endeavours to draw people to church, and to restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from their profanation of God’s most holy day, I cannot conceive. But if any should be so mad as to do it, I wish you would not regard it. For my part, I value no censure on this account : I have long since shook hands with the world, and I heartily wish I had never given them more reason to speak against me.

“ As for your proposal of letting some other person read, alas ! you do not consider what a people these are. I do not

think one man among them could read a sermon, without spelling a good part of it ; and how would that edify the rest ? Nor has any of our family a voice strong enough to be heard by such a number of people.

“ But there is one thing, about which I am much dissatisfied ; that is, their being present at family prayers. I do not speak of any concern I am under, barely because so many are present,—for those who have the honour of speaking to the great and holy God, need not be ashamed to speak before the whole world,—but because of my sex. I doubt, if it be proper for *me* to present the prayers of the people to God. Last Sunday I would fain have dismissed them before prayers ; but they begged so earnestly to stay, I durst not deny them.”

In this, as in every other part of her conduct, Mrs. Wesley acted upon principle, and from mature deliberation. No person, perhaps, ever had a greater regard for the established order of the Church of England, than she had ; but she considered her conduct in this instance as co-inciding with the spirit and intention of that order—to reform the manners of the people, and to beget in them a reverence for the public worship. But, though she was satisfied of the propriety of her own conduct, she thought it her duty to abide by the decision of her husband. He had already written to her on the subject ; and though he made some objections, yet, upon the whole, he seemed to approve of the meeting. But Mr. Inman, the Curate, and two or three of his companions highly disapproved of it, and wrote to Mr. Wesley, complaining heavily, calling it a conventicle, &c. These representations had such an effect upon Mr. Wesley’s mind, that he wrote to his wife in a tone of disapprobation which he had not used before. Her answer, which is dated the 25th of February, is worthy of herself and of the cause in which she was engaged.

“ Some few days since,” says she, “ I received a letter from you, I suppose dated the 16th instant, which I made

no great haste to answer; because I judged it necessary for both of us to take some time to consider, before you determine in a matter of such great importance. I shall not enquire how it was possible that you should be prevailed on, by the senseless clamours of two or three of the worst of your parish, to condemn what you so very lately approved; but I shall tell you my thoughts, in as few words as possible. I do not hear of more than three or four persons who are against our meeting, of whom *Inman* is the chief. He and Whitely, I believe, may call it a conventicle; but we hear no outcry here, nor has any one said a word against it to me. And what does their calling it a conventicle signify? Does it alter the nature of the thing? Or do you think, that what they say is a sufficient reason to forbear a thing that has already done much good, and, by the blessing of God, may do much more? If its being called a conventicle, by those who know in their conscience they misrepresent it, did really make it one, what you say would be somewhat to the purpose; but it is plain, in fact, that this one thing has brought more people to church, than ever any thing did in so short a time. We used not to have above twenty or twenty-five at evening service, whereas now we have between two and three hundred; which are more than ever came before to hear *Inman* in the morning.

“ Beside the constant attendance on the public worship of God, our meeting has wonderfully conciliated the minds of this people towards us, so that we now live in the greatest amity imaginable; and, what is still better, they are very much reformed in their behaviour on the Lord’s Day: and those who used to be playing in the streets, now come to hear a good sermon read, which is surely more acceptable to Almighty God.

“ Another reason for what I do, is, that I have no other way of conversing with this people, and therefore have no other way of doing them good; but, by this, I have an



opportunity of exercising the greatest and noblest charity, that is, charity to their souls.

“ Some families who seldom went to church, now go constantly ; and one person who has not been there for seven years, is now prevailed upon to go with the rest.

“ There are many other good consequences of this meeting, which I have not time to mention. Now, I beseech you, weigh all things in an impartial balance : on the one side, the honour of Almighty God, the doing much good to many souls, and the friendship of the best among whom we live ; on the other, (if folly, impiety, and vanity may abide in the scale against so ponderous a weight,) the senseless objections of a few scandalous persons, laughing at us, and censuring us as precise and hypocritical ; and when you have duly considered all things, let me know your positive determination.

“ I need not tell you the consequences, if you determine to put an end to our meeting. You may easily foresee what prejudices it may raise in the minds of these people against Inman especially, who has had so little wit as to speak publicly against it. I can now keep them to the church ; but if it be laid aside, I doubt they will never go to hear him more, at least those who come from the lower end of the town ; but if this be continued till you return, which now will not be long, it may please God that their hearts may be so changed by that time, that they may love and delight in his public worship so as never to neglect it more.

“ If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire* me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience ; but send me your *positive command*, in such full and express terms, as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

*Inman*, the Curate mentioned above, was something of an original. Upon Mr. Wesley's return from London at one time, a complaint was made concerning his Curate, "that he preached nothing to his congregation, except the duty of paying their debts, and behaving well among their neighbours." The complainants added, "We think, Sir, there is something more in religion than this." Mr. Wesley replied, "There certainly is: I will hear him myself." He accordingly sent for *Inman*, and told him, that he wished him to preach the next Lord's day, adding, "You could, I suppose, prepare a sermon upon any text that I should give you." The Curate replied, "By all means, Sir." "Then," said Mr. Wesley, "prepare a sermon on that text, Heb. xi, 6. *Without faith, it is impossible to please Him*, 'i.e. God.'" When the time arrived, Mr. Wesley read the prayers, and *Inman* ascended the pulpit. He read the text with great solemnity, and thus began: "It must be confessed, Friends, that faith is a most excellent virtue; and it produces other virtues also. In particular, it makes a man pay his debts as soon as he can."—He went on in this way, enforcing the common social duties, for about a quarter of an hour, and then concluded. "So," said Mr. J. Wesley to me, "my father saw it was a lost case."—I think neither Mr. Southey, nor Bishop Lavington, would have entertained any fear of this man becoming an Enthusiast.

Mrs. Wesley continued to discharge the duties of a wife and parent with the greatest diligence and punctuality. The letters she wrote to her sons, when at Oxford, and after they had left it, shew her in the most amiable light, both for knowledge and piety. In 1735, she lost her husband, and afterwards divided her time between her children, till about the year 1739; from which period, she resided chiefly in London.

It appears from all we have seen of Mrs. Wesley, that she

was a woman really devoted to God ; but it does not appear that she had a clear notion of justification, as distinct from sanctification. On the contrary, she seems to have confounded them together ; and this hindered her from enjoying that full assurance of her state, and the peace and joy consequent upon it, which otherwise she would have had. When her two sons, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, began to preach the doctrine of justification by faith, in 1738, and many professed to be so justified, and to know the time when this change in their state took place, she mentions their notions as new, in a letter she wrote to her son Samul, in November this year ; \* but she had not then 'conversed with them on the subject, and therefore did not know what doctrines they taught, except from report. It has indèed been said, that she "lived long enough to deplore the extravagance of her sons ;" and this assertion was founded on the letter above-mentioned. But the following extracts from three of her letters to Mr. Charles Wesley, will shew us her opinion of the doctrine and conduct of her sons, more clearly than any thing which has yet appeared in print.

" *October 19, 1738.*

" IT is with much pleasure I find your mind is somewhat easier than formerly, and I heartily thank God for it. 'The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear ?' If this hath been your case, it has been sad indeed. But blessed be God, who gave you convictions of the evil of sin, as contrary to the purity of the Divine nature, and the perfect goodness of his law ! Blessed be God, who shewed you the necessity you were in of a Saviour to deliver you from the power of sin and Satan, (for Christ will be no Saviour to such as see not their need of one,) and directed you by faith to lay hold of that stupendous mercy

\* Printed in Dr. Priestley's Collection.

offered us by redeeming love ! Jesus is the only physician of souls ; his blood the only salve which can heal a wounded conscience. It is not in wealth, or honour, or sensual pleasures, to relieve a spirit heavy-laden and weary of the burden of sin : These things have power to increase our guilt, by alienating our hearts from God ; but none to make our peace with Him, to reconcile God to man, and man to God, and to renew the union between the Divine and human nature.—No, there is none but Christ, none but Christ, who is sufficient for these things. But, blessed be God, he is an all-sufficient Saviour ! And blessed be his holy name, that thou hast found him a Saviour to thee, my son ! Oh ! let us love him much, for we have much to be forgiven.

“ I would gladly know what your notion is of justifying faith ; because you speak of it as a thing you have but lately obtained.”

The second letter is dated December 6th, 1738. In it she says, “ I think you are fallen into an odd way of thinking. You say, that, till within a few months, you had no spiritual life, nor any justifying faith. Now this is, as if a man should affirm he was not alive in his infancy, because, when an infant, he did not know he was alive. All, then, that I can gather from your letter is, that till a little while ago you were not so well satisfied of your being a Christian as you are now. I heartily rejoice that you have now attained to a strong and lively hope in God’s mercy through Christ. Not that I can think you were totally without saving faith before ; but it is one thing to have faith, and another thing to be sensible we have it. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and is the gift of God ; but to feel, or be inwardly sensible, that we have true faith, requires a further operation of God’s Holy Spirit. You say you have peace, but not joy, in believing. Blessed be God for peace ; may this peace rest with you. Joy will follow, perhaps not very closely, but it will follow faith and

love. God's promises are sealed to us, but not dated. Therefore patiently attend his pleasure; he will give you joy in believing. Amen."

The third letter is dated December 27th, 1739, after she had come to reside chiefly in London. Here she enjoyed the conversation of her sons alternately, the one being always in town while the other was in the country. She now attended on their ministry, conversed with the people of their Society, became more perfectly acquainted with their whole doctrine, and seems heartily to have embraced it. Charles was in Bristol when she wrote this letter to him. She observes, "You cannot more desire to see me, than I do to see you. Your brother,—whom I shall henceforward call Son Wesley, since my dear Sam is gone home,—has just been with me, and much revived my spirits. Indeed, I have often found that he never speaks in my hearing, without my receiving some spiritual benefit. But his visits are seldom and short; for which I never blame him, because I know he is well employed; and blessed be God, he hath great success in his ministry.

"But, my dear Charles, still I want either him or you. For, indeed, in the most literal sense, I am become a little child, and want continual succour. 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.' I feel much comfort and support from religious conversation, when I can obtain it. Formerly I rejoiced in the absence of company; and found, the less I had of creature comforts, the more I had from God. But alas! I am fallen from that spiritual converse I once enjoyed; and why is it so? Because I want faith. God is an omnipresent unchangeable good, "in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The fault is in myself; and I attribute all mistakes in judgment, all errors in practice, to want of faith in the blessed Jesus. O! my dear, when I consider the dignity of his person, the perfection of his purity, the greatness of his sufferings; but, above all,

his boundless love, I am astonished and utterly confounded : I am lost in thought ; I fall into nothing before him ! O how inexcusable is that person who has knowledge of these things, and yet remains poor and low in faith and love. I speak as one guilty in this matter.\*

“ I have been prevented from finishing my letter. I complained I had none to converse with me on spiritual things ; but for these several days, I have had the conversation of many good Christians, who have refreshed, in some measure, my fainting spirits. And though they hindered my writing, yet it was a pleasing, and I hope not an unprofitable, interruption they gave me. I hope we shall shortly speak face to face ; and I shall then, if God permit, impart my thoughts more fully. But then, alas ! when you come, your brother leaves me. Yet that is the will of God, in whose blessed service you are engaged ; who hath hitherto blessed your labours, and preserved your persons. That he may continue so to prosper your work, and protect you both from evil, and give you strength and courage to preach the *true gospel*, in opposition to the united powers of evil men and evil angels, is the hearty prayer of, dear Charles, your loving mother,

“ S. W.”

This letter gives full evidence that Mrs. Wesley cordially approved of the conduct of her sons, and was animated with zeal for the success of their labours. She continued in the most perfect harmony with them till her death. Attending on their ministry, and walking in the light of God's countenance, she rejoiced in the blessed experience of the truths she heard them preach.—An account of her happy death shall be given in the proper place.

Mrs. Wesley had taken great pains with all her children, to furnish their minds with useful knowledge, and to instil

\* She now began to feel the want of living faith. This conviction always precedes that divine gift.

into them the principles of religion and virtue. The daughters were by no means neglected ; they shared their mother's care with the sons. Many of their letters are now before me, in which there is much strong sense, lively wit, and accurate language ; though they were written on common subjects, and without any expectation that they would be preserved. Most of them had a fine genius for poetry : But Mrs. Wright shone the brightest in this walk of elegant amusement ; and to her I shall chiefly confine my observations, in speaking of the daughters of these venerable parents.

Mrs. Wright was her mother's tenth or eleventh child ; and it has been said, that when she was eight years old, she could read the Greek Testament. From her infancy she was gay and sprightly, and extremely addicted to wit and humour. As she grew up, she indulged herself in these dispositions so far, as to give great uneasiness to her parents. About the year 1724, or the beginning of 1725, a gentleman, respectable both for his abilities and situation in life, paid his addresses to her, and she had a sincere regard for him. But, from some circumstance, he and her father disagreed, and the affair was broken off. From a concurrence of circumstances in the end of the year 1725, she was induced to marry a person not at all adapted to make her happy ; being rude in address, and much inferior to her in understanding : he also proved an unkind husband. Her situation preyed upon her mind, her health and strength gradually wasted away, and at length she sunk into a degree of melancholy that made her truly wretched. Most of her verses which have been preserved, are beautiful, and written in the true spirit of poetry ; but they are saddened with an air of deep distress. The following address to her husband will give some notion of his character, and shew the true cause of her wretchedness.

## MEHETABEL WRIGHT TO HER HUSBAND.

THE ardent lover cannot find  
A coldness in his fair unkind,  
But blaming what he cannot hate  
He mildly chides the dear ingrate ;  
And though despairing of relief,  
In soft complaining vents his grief.

Then what should hinder but that I,  
Impatient of my wrongs, may try,  
By saddest, softest strains, to move  
My wedded, latest, dearest love,  
To throw his cold neglect aside,  
And cheer once more his injur'd bride ?

O thou ! whom sacred rites design'd  
My guide and husband ever kind,  
My sov'reign master, best of friends,  
On whom my earthly bliss depends !  
If e'er thou didst in Hetty see  
Ought fair, or good, or dear to thee ;  
If gentle speech can ever move  
The cold remains of former love ;  
Turn thee at last,—my bosom ease,  
Or tell me why I cease to please.

Is it because revolving years,  
Heart-breaking sighs, and fruitless tears,  
Have quite depriv'd this form of mine  
Of all that once thou fanci'dst fine ?  
Ah no ! what once allur'd thy sight  
Is still in its meridian height :  
These eyes their usual lustre shew,  
When un-eclips'd by flowing woe.  
Old age and wrinkles in this face  
As yet could never find a place ;  
A youthful grace adorns the lines,  
Where still the purple current shines,  
Unless, by thy ungente art,  
It flies to aid my wretched heart :  
Nor does this slighted bosom shew  
The thousand hours it spends in woe.

Or is it that, oppress'd with care,  
I stun with loud complaints thine ear,



And make thy home, for quiet meant,  
 The seat of noise and discontent ?  
 Oh no ! those ears were ever free  
 From matrimonial melody.  
 For though thine absence I lament,  
 When half the lonely night is spent ;  
 Yet when the watch, or early morn,  
 Has brought me hopes of thy return,  
 I oft have wip'd these watchful eyes,  
 Conceal'd my cares, and curb'd my sighs,  
 In spite of grief, to let thee see  
 I wore an endless smile for thee.

Had I not practis'd ev'ry art  
 T' oblige, divert, and cheer thy heart,  
 To make me pleasing in thine eyes,  
 And turn thy home to paradise,  
 I had not ask'd, Why dost thou shun  
 These faithful arms, and eager run  
 To some obscure unclean retreat,  
 With fiends incarnate glad to meet,  
 The vile companions of thy mirth,  
 The scum and refuse of the earth ?  
 Who, when inspir'd with beer, can grin  
 At witless oaths and jests obscene ;  
 Till the most learned of the throng  
 Begins a tale of ten hours long,  
 Whilst thou in raptures, with stretch'd jaws,  
 Crownest each joke with loud applause !

Depriv'd of freedom, health, and ease,  
 And rivall'd by such *things* as these,  
 This latest effort will I try,  
 Or to regain thine heart, or die !  
 Soft as I am, I'll make thee see,  
 I will not brook contempt from thee.  
 Then quit the shuffling, doubtful sense,  
 Nor hold me longer in suspense.  
 Unkind, ungrateful as thou art,  
 Say, must I ne'er regain thy heart ?  
 Must all attempts to please thee prove  
 Unable to regain thy love ?  
 If so, by truth itself I swear,  
 The sad reverse I cannot bear ;

No rest, no pleasure will I see,  
 My whole of bliss is lost with thee.  
 I'll give all thought of patience o'er,  
 (A gift I never lost before,)  
 Indulge at once my rage and grief,  
 Mourn obstinate, disdain relief;  
 And call that wretch my mortal foe,  
 Who tries to mitigate my woe;  
 Till life, on terms severe as these,  
 Shall, ebbing, leave my heart at ease;  
 To thee thy liberty restore,  
 To laugh when Hetty is no more.

The following beautiful lines seem to have been an extempore effusion, poured out from the fulness of her heart on the occasion, and sharpened with the keen distress of her hopeless situation.

ADDRESS TO HER DYING INFANT,\* SEPTEMBER, 1728.

TENDER softness ! infant mild !  
 Perfect, sweetest, loveliest child !  
 Transient lustre ! beauteous clay !  
 Smiling wonder of a day !  
 Ere the last convulsive start  
 Rend thy unresisting heart ;  
 Ere the long-enduring swoon  
 Weigh thy precious eye-lids down ;  
 Ah, regard a mother's moan ;  
 Anguish deeper than thy own !

Fairest eyes, whose dawning light  
 Late with rapture bless'd my sight ;  
 Ere your orbs extinguish'd be,  
 Bend their trembling beams on me !  
 Drooping sweetness ! verdant flower !  
 Blooming, with'ring in an hour !  
 Ere thy gentle breast sustains  
 Latest, fiercest, mortal pains,  
 Hear a suppliant ! let me be  
 Partner in thy destiny !

\* The child died the third day after it was born.—*Private Papers.*

That whene'er the fatal cloud  
Must thy radiant temples shroud ;  
When deadly damps (impending now)  
Shall hover round thy destin'd brow ;  
Diffusive may their influence be,  
And with the *blossom* blast the *tree* !

In this state of mind, and declining fast in health, she wrote the following Epitaph for herself:—

DESTIN'D, while living, to sustain  
An equal share of grief and pain !  
All various ills of human race  
Within this breast had once a place.  
Without complaint she learn'd to bear  
A living death, a long despair ;  
Till hard oppress'd by adverse fate,  
O'ercharg'd, she sunk beneath the weight,  
And to this peaceful tomb retir'd,  
So much esteem'd, so long desir'd !  
The painful mortal conflict's o'er :  
A broken heart can bleed no more.

Mrs. Wright, however, lived many years after this ; and at length true religion, coming to her aid, soothed the anguish of her mind, and gave her peace, though she never recovered her health.

The first religious letter she wrote to Mr. Wesley was in 1743 : She says, “ Some years ago I told my brother Charles I could not be of his way of thinking then, but that, if ever I was, I would as freely own it. After I was convinced of sin—and of your opinion as far as I had examined your principles, I still forbore declaring my sentiments so openly as I had inclination to do, fearing I should relapse into my former state. When I was delivered from this fear, and had a blessed hope, that he who had begun would finish his work, I never confessed so fully as I ought, how entirely I was of your mind, because I was taxed with insincerity and hypocrisy whenever I opened my mouth in favour of religion, or

owned how great things God had done for me. This discouraged me utterly, and prevented me from making my change as public as my folly and vanity had formerly been. But now my health is gone, I cannot be easy without declaring that I have long desired to know but *one thing*, that is *Jesus Christ and him crucified*; and this desire prevails above all others. And though I am cut off from all human help or ministry, I am not without assistance; though I have no spiritual friend, nor ever had one yet, except perhaps once in a year or two, when I have seen one of my brothers, or some other religious person, by stealth: yet (no thanks to me!) I am enabled to seek him still, and to be satisfied with nothing less than God, in whose presence I affirm this truth. I dare not desire health, only patience, resignation, and the spirit of an healthful mind. I have been so long weak, that I know not how long my trial may last; but I have a firm persuasion and blessed hope (though no full assurance) that in the country I am going to, I shall not sing HALLELUJAH, and HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, without company, as I have done in this. Dear brother, I am unused to speak or write on these things; I only speak my plain thoughts as they occur. Adieu! If you have time from better business to send a line to Stanmore, so great a comfort would be as welcome as it is wanted."

In July 1744, she wrote to her brother from Bristol, where it seems she then resided, at least for some time. She speaks of herself in the most humiliating terms. She highly commends the christian friendship of Mrs. Vigor, Miss Stafford, and some others. She now enjoyed the means of grace, and the benefit of conversation with the people of the Society, and continued to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Wright persevered in a religious course of life, patient in her sufferings, resigned to her weakness, and waiting for full salvation in a deliverance from this mortal state, till

1751. In March this year, Mr. Charles Wesley speaks thus of her :—" Prayed by my sister Wright, a gracious, tender, trembling soul ; a bruised reed, which the Lord will not break." She died on the 21st of the same month, and Mr. Charles preached her funeral sermon. He observes, that he had sweet fellowship with her in explaining those words, "*Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself ; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.*" He adds, " All present seemed partakers both of my sorrow and my joy."

From this authentic account of Mrs. Wright, taken from original letters, we may correct an error of Mr. Duncombe concerning her. This gentleman has insinuated in his *Feminead*, that her pungent distress and gloomy despair originated from mistaken and superstitious views of religion : It appears, on the contrary, that they arose from a very different cause, and that religion restored her to peace and happiness ; and indeed it was the only thing that could do it. Mr. Duncombe's words are,

But ah ! why heaves my breast this pensive sigh ?  
 Why starts this tear unbidden from my eye ?  
 What breast from sighs, what eye from tears refrains,  
 When sweetly mournful, hapless Wright complains ?  
 And who but grieves to see her gen'rous mind,  
 For nobler views and worthier guests design'd,  
 Amidst the hateful form of black despair,  
 Wan with the gloom of superstitious care ?  
 In pity-moving lays, with earnest cries,  
 She call'd on heaven to close her weary eyes ;  
 And, long on earth by heart-felt woes oppress'd,  
 Was borne by friendly death to welcome rest ! \*

It is grievous to see authors, whose works are likely to be read, take every opportunity to dress out religion in the most ugly forms they can invent, and even attributing to it

\* See Christian Mag. vol. iii. p. 523.

those calamities of life which religion alone is able to alleviate and redress.

The following, among other poetical compositions, were written by Mrs. Wright; but at what period of her life, is uncertain.

TO THE MEMORY OF HER UNCLE, A PHYSICIAN,\*  
WHO DIED IN 1737.†

How can the Muse attempt the string,  
Forsaken by her guardian power?  
Ah me! that she survives to sing  
Her friend and patron now no more!  
Yet private grief she might suppress,  
Since Clio bears no selfish mind;  
But oh! she mourns to wild excess  
The friend and patron of mankind.

Alas! the sovereign healing art,  
Which rescu'd thousands from the grave,  
Unaided left the gentlest heart,  
Nor could its skilful master save.  
Who shall the helpless sex sustain,  
Now Varo's lenient hand is gone,  
Which knew so well to soften pain,  
And ward all dangers but his own?

His darling Muse, his Clio dear,  
Whom first his favour rais'd to fame,  
His gentle voice vouchsaf'd to cheer;  
His art upheld her tender frame.  
Pale envy durst not shew her teeth;  
Above contempt she gaily shone  
Chief favourite, till the hand of death  
Endanger'd BOTH by striking ONE.

Perceiving well, devoid of fear,  
His latest fatal conflict nigh,  
Reclin'd on her he held most dear,  
Whose breast receiv'd his parting sigh;

\* Christian Magazine, vol. iii. p. 264.      † Mr. CHARLES WESLEY'S Journal.  
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With ev'ry art and grace adorn'd,  
 By man admir'd, by heaven approv'd,  
 Good Varo died—applauded, mourn'd,  
 And honour'd by the Muse he lov'd.

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TO THE MEMORY OF HER SISTER, MRS. WHITELAMB, WHO DIED  
 IN CHILD-BED, ABOUT A YEAR AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

IF happy spirits are allow'd to know,  
 And hover round what once they lov'd below,  
 Maria, gentlest excellence, attend  
 To one who glories to have call'd thee FRIEND!  
 Remote in merit, though allied in blood,  
 Though worthless I, and thou divinely good,  
 Accept, dear shade, from me these artless lays,  
 Who never durst unjustly blame or praise.

With business and devotion never cloy'd,  
 No moment of thy life pass'd unemploy'd:  
 Well-natur'd mirth, matur'd discretion join'd,  
 Constant attendants on the virtuous mind:  
 Ah me! that heav'n has from this bosom torn  
 The dearest friend whom I must ever mourn,  
 Ere Stella could discharge the smallest part  
 Of what she ow'd to such immense desert.

Pleasing thy face and form, tho' heav'n confin'd  
 To scanty limits thy extensive mind:  
 Witness the taintless lustre of thy skin,  
 Bright emblem of the brighter soul within;  
 That soul which easy, unaffected, mild,  
 Through jetty eyes with pleasing sweetness smil'd.

To soundest prudence, life's unerring guide;  
 To love sincere, religion void of pride;  
 To friendship, perfect in a female mind,  
 Which I can never hope again to find;  
 To mirth, the balm of care, from lightness free;  
 To stedfast truth, unwearied industry;—  
 To every charm and grace, compris'd in you,  
 Sister and friend, a long and last adieu!

•

## A FAREWELL TO THE WORLD.

WHILE sickness rends this tenement of clay,  
 Th' approaching change with pleasure I survey,  
 O'erjoy'd to reach the goal with eager pace,  
 Ere my slow life has measur'd half its race.  
 No longer shall I bear, my friends to please,  
 The hard constraint of seeming much at ease ;  
 Wearing an outward smile, a look serene,  
 While piercing racks and tortures lurk within.  
 Yet let me not, ungrateful to my God,  
 Record the *evil*, and forget the *good* ;  
 For *both* I humble adoration pay,  
 And bless the power who gives and takes away :  
 Long shall my faithful memory retain,  
 And oft recal each interval of pain.  
 Nay, to high Heav'n for greater gifts I bend,  
 Health I've enjoy'd, and I had once a friend.  
 Our labour sweet, if labour it may seem,  
 Allow'd the sportive and instructive scene :  
 Yet here no lewd or useless wit was found,  
 We pois'd the wav'ring sail with ballast sound.  
 Learning here plac'd her richer stores in view,  
 Or, wing'd with love, the minutes gaily flew.

Nay, yet sublimer joys our bosoms prov'd,  
 Divine benevolence, by heav'n belov'd :  
 Wan meagre forms, torn from impending death,  
 Exulting, bless'd us with reviving breath.  
 The shiv'ring wretch we cloth'd, the mourner cheer'd,  
 And sickness ceas'd to groan when we appear'd.  
 Unask'd, our care assists with tender art  
 Their bodies, nor neglects th' immortal part.

Sometimes, in shades impierc'd by Cynthia's beam,  
 Whose lustre glimmer'd on the dimpled stream,  
 We led the sprightly dance through sylvan scenes,  
 Or tripp'd like fairies o'er the level greens ;  
 In ev'ry breast a gen'rous fervour glows,  
 Soft bliss, which innocence alone bestows !  
 From fragrant herbage, deck'd with pearly dews,  
 And flow'rets of a thousand various hues,  
 By wafting gales the mingling odours fly,  
 And round our heads in whisp'ring breezes sigh.



Whole nature seems to heighten and improve  
 The holier hours of innocence and love.  
 Youth, wit, good-nature, candour, sense, combin'd—  
 To serve, delight, and civilize mankind;  
 In wisdom's lore we ev'ry heart engage,  
 And triumph to restore the golden age!

Now close the blissful scene, exhausted Muse,  
 The latest blissful scene which thou shalt choose!  
 Sate with life, what joys for me remain,  
 Save one dear wish, to balance ev'ry pain?—  
 To bow my head, with grief and toil oppress,  
 Till borne by angel-bands to everlasting rest.

Mr. John Wesley subjoins to this poem the following note :  
 " It is but justice to her memory to observe, that she was at rest before she went hence ; being for some years a witness of that rest which remains, even here, for the people of God."

Dr. Whitehead, in his *Memoirs of the Family*, observes, Miss Kezzy Wesley was addressed by Mr. Hall, a young gentleman of a good understanding, agreeable in his person, and engaging in his address. He was entered at Lincoln College as Mr. Wesley's pupil, on the 22d of January, 1731 ; but Mr. Wesley was totally ignorant of his addresses to his sister.\* Mr. Hall entered into Orders while he was at Oxford ; and though most of the family thought highly of him in every respect as a religious character, yet Samuel Wesley strongly doubted his sincerity. Mr. John Wesley believed him sincere and pious ; but, in a letter written to his mother, when Mr. Hall was at Oxford, he speaks of him as highly enthusiastic and superstitious. After he had gained the affections of the young lady, he quitted her, and paid his addresses to her elder sister. The family opposed this conduct with great vehemence, especially the three brothers. But the marriage, notwithstanding, took place, and the future conduct of Mr. Hall by no means corresponded to the expectations they

\* This appears from a letter Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Hall, in which he mentions this circumstance.

at first formed of him. After some years he quitted his wife, having had ten children by her, and afterwards lived in the most loose and scandalous manner. Mrs. Hall bore her trials with remarkable patience and resignation. Indeed, in this respect, she was a pattern to all Christians; for I do not remember, that I ever heard her speak ill of any person, whatever injuries she might have received.—Miss Kezzy Wesley died on the 9th of March 1741, and Mr. Charles gives the following account of her death in a letter to his brother :

“ Yesterday morning, sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished his work, and cut it short in mercy.—Full of thankfulness, resignation and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus, and fell asleep.”

Miss Wesley, the only daughter of Mr. Charles Wesley, in a letter to Mr. Watson, the able defender of Mr. Wesley's character against the puerile attacks of Mr. Southey, observes, “ I wish to correct an error into which *Dr. Whithead* and *Mr. Hampson* have fallen, from whom *Southey*, I presume, has taken it, respecting my beloved aunt Hall, as it is not generally known to be false. Mr. Hall first courted *her* when she lived with her uncle, *Matthew Wesley*, in *London*; this was unknown to the family at that time. He then paid his addresses to *Kezia*; and when the match was fixed, he returned to *Martha*, whose affections he had won, and married her against the expostulations of her brothers. Had not this been the fact, my good grandmother would have strenuously opposed the match. I had this account from my aunt herself, and mentioned it to my father, who said, ‘ He knew, that she ‘always justified herself from the circumstance of *first love*; ‘but she ought not to have taken him.’ *Kezia* lived four years after, and it certainly was not from any thing she suffered on this account that she died.”

A letter now lying before me in Mrs. Hall's own hand, to

Mr. John Wesley, dated June the 26th, 1743, shews that she had not even then the same opinion of her husband that her brothers had. She observes, "Doubtless you knew that I should be much concerned at what you said respecting Mr. Hall. I don't know whether I know certainly what you mean by *his new gospel* or no, but I suppose I may guess at it. I have long thought, I do still think him, a servant of Christ. How then could it be, that he should not be kept, at least from dangerous errors? I know that you are ready to answer me, nay, indeed, I can answer myself, that it must be from some unfaithfulness or other.—And now immediately come the false Moravians to my mind. For if he should be so unhappy as to fall into any, or ever so many dangerous errors, I must lay them all at their door, who transformed themselves into angels of light to seduce him from that apostolic church in which he was baptized, and in which he was called to the honour of being not only a member, but a Priest. O that he might, as you say, find them out!"

*Love hopeth all things.* I was well acquainted with Mrs. Hall, and could answer for her sincerity; but certainly the facts were strong against her unhappy husband. Mr. Wesley, however, hoped that, before he went hence, "*God gave him repentance unto life.*"

That Mrs. Hall at this time enjoyed *the faith of the Gospel*, is evident from a passage in the same letter. She observes, "I have indeed that blessed peace which passeth all understanding, and have had such remarkable promises so particularly applied to me, that I stand astonished at the goodness of God, supplying in so wonderful a manner the loss of parents, children, and friends to me. One day at church, those words (which I had never taken notice of before,) were given me in such a remarkable manner as I believe you understand: '*As a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, so shall the Lord thy God rejoice over thee.*' I am ashamed that I should love so little, having so much forgiven, and such constant blessings."—Mrs.

Hall was a woman of a remarkably strong understanding. We see, however, that she also became an enthusiast ! She now enjoys the happy fruits of it.

In addition to the above, I have to add some interesting particulars from a letter of Miss Kezzy Wesley, now lying before me, to her brother John. It is dated June 16th, 1734.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ I intended not to write till I could give you an account of Mr. Hall’s affair ; but it is needless, because I believe he won’t do any thing without your approbation. I am entirely of your opinion, that we ought to ‘ endeavour after perfect resignation ;’ and I have learned to practise this duty in one particular, which I think is of the greatest importance in life, viz. marriage. I am as indifferent as it is lawful for any person to be, whether I ever change my state or not, because I think a single life is the more excellent way ; and there are also several reasons, why I rather desire to continue as I am. One is, because I desire to be entirely disengaged from the world ; but the chief is, I am so well apprised of the great duty a wife owes to her husband, that I think it is almost impossible she should ever discharge it as she ought. But I can scarce say I have the liberty of chusing, for my relations are continually soliciting me to marry.—I shall endeavour to be as resigned and cheerful as possible to whatever God is pleased to ordain for me.”

It will not much surprise the sensible reader, that this courtship should not end happily. Mr. Hall was a man of strong passions, as was too fully proved in his after life. We cannot wonder therefore, that he should grow weary of a suit, the object of which was, in every respect, so unlike the suitor.

I had written the above account, more than a year before I saw Dr. Clarke’s “ Memoirs of the Wesley Family,” in which

the subject of Mrs. Hall's marriage is largely considered. I believe no person now alive, excepting only her nearest relatives, was so intimately acquainted with Mrs. Hall as I was. To all that is said of her excellent understanding and temper, and her most blameless life, I heartily subscribe. But Mrs. Hall did not speak of her marriage quite as the respectable Biographer of her family does. That it would be inexcusably wrong for Miss Kezzy Wesley to have accepted Mr. Hall, after she knew his previous engagement to her sister, even if he had desired it, she knew and felt, and so did every one of the family. But, I believe, Mrs. Hall was convinced for many years, that her brothers were so far right, that for both sisters to have refused him, after he had manifested such a want of principle and honour, would have been, at least, *the more excellent way*. I write to maintain *the faith of the Gospel*, which alone *overcomes the world, and purifies the heart*, and without which these fruits cannot be. Mrs. Hall, at that time, had only the faith common to all the family. Can we expect to find that high and constant self-denial which the Gospel inculcates, where "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*" are unknown? No, we ought not. The conflicts, and the halting obedience, described in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, (under which her excellent brothers so long groaned,) is a description given by the *Holy Spirit of God* of the real state even of the most sincere of such believers. I believe, if, before her marriage, she had obtained the faith which she describes in her letter to her brother, inserted above, and which was her support during her suffering life, she would have acted a very different part. No person can dispute the prior claim of Martha; yet that claim, I still think, with Mr. Wesley, ought to have been disclaimed. But Martha's affections were engaged; Kezzy's were not. The marriage which took place was, with respect to her, a deliverance.

The indulgence of Mr. Hall's vicious propensities led him at

length to *glory in his shame*. He would talk, with apparent ease, to his chaste wife, concerning his concubines ! He would tell her that she was his *carnal* wife, but they were his *spiritual* wives !, for he had taught them to despise all sober scriptural religion, and to talk as enthusiastically and as corruptly as himself. At length he broke all the bands, and retired, not to *Ireland*, but to the *West Indies*, taking his chief favourite with him. She was a remarkable woman ; and appears to have had more personal courage than her wretched keeper. In an assault on the house in which they lived, by a black banditti, she seized a large pewter vessel, and standing at the turning of the stairs which led to their apartment, she knocked the assailants down, in succession, as they approached, and maintained the post till succour arrived, and dispersed the villains.

He continued his connection with this wretched woman till she died ; and then returned to *England*, weak, and in some degree humbled. Mrs. Hall, bound, as she most conscientiously thought herself, by her original vows, received him with her usual equanimity, and shewed him every kind and charitable attention till his death. Mr. John Wesley, the most charitable of men, gives the following account of the closing scene :

“ I came to *Bristol* just time enough, not to see, but to bury, poor Mr. Hall, my brother-in-law, who died on Wednesday morning, January 6, 1776, I trust in peace ; for God had given him deep repentance. Such another monument of Divine mercy, considering how low he had fallen, and from what heights of holiness, I have not seen, no not in *seventy years*. I had designed to have visited him in the morning : but he did not stay for my coming. It is enough, if, after all his wanderings, we meet again in Abraham’s bosom.” JOURNAL, Vol. V p. 177.

Mrs. Hall survived all her brothers and sisters, and died in peace, July 12th, 1791.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, JUNIOR.

SAMUEL WESLEY, M. A., son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, was born about 1692,\* a year or two before his parents removed to Epworth; being nearly eleven years older than his brother Mr. John Wesley, and sixteen older than Mr. Charles. Concerning his childhood, there is something very remarkable. He did not speak at all till he was more than four years old, and was thought to be deficient in understanding. But he one day answered a question, which was proposed to a servant concerning him, in such a way as greatly surprised all that were present: and from that time he spoke without any difficulty. He was sent to Westminster school about the beginning of the year 1704, and admitted a King's scholar in 1707.† Before he left home, his mother, by judicious and constant instruction, had formed his mind to a knowledge and serious sense of religion; but she knew the danger of his situation at Westminster, and how exceedingly apt young persons are to be drawn aside from religion and virtue, by improper companions, and bad examples constantly before their eyes. On this account she was anxious for the preservation of his morals, as he grew up and became more exposed to temptation. After she had recovered from the shock of the fire, which destroyed all they had, and from the fury of which they saved themselves with great difficulty,

\* This date of his birth is taken from a memorandum, which Mr. John Wesley wrote on the back of one of his brother's letters.

† WELCH's List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were elected to Christ Church, Oxford, and to Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 91.

she wrote him a long letter, dated October 1709; which, for the importance of the matter, and the energy with which it is written, is highly deserving of preservation; but, on account of its length, I can insert only a part of it.

“ I hope,” says she, “ that you retain the impressions of your education, nor have forgot that the vows of God are upon you. You know that the first-fruits are heaven’s by an unalienable right; and that, as your parents devoted you to the service of the altar, so you yourself made it your choice when your father was offered another way of life for you. But have you duly considered what such a choice, and such a dedication imports? Consider well, what separation from the world! what purity! what devotion! what exemplary virtue! is required in those who are to guide others to glory. I say *exemplary*; for low, common degrees of piety are not sufficient for those of the sacred function. You must not think to live like the rest of the world: Your light must so shine among men, that they may see your good works, and thereby be led to glorify your Father which is in heaven. For my part, I cannot see with what face clergymen can reprove sinners, or exhort men to lead a good life, when they themselves indulge their own corrupt inclinations, and by their practice contradict their doctrine. If the holy Jesus be in truth their Master, and they be really his Embassadors, surely it becomes them to live like his Disciples: And if they do not, what a sad account must they give of their stewardship !

“ I would advise you, as much as possible in your present circumstances, to throw your business into a certain method; by which means you will learn to improve every precious moment, and find an unspeakable facility in the performance of your respective duties. Begin and end the day with Him who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*; and if you really experience what it is to love God, you will redeem all the time you can for his more immediate service. I will tell you what rule I



used to observe when I was in my father's house, and had as little, if not less liberty than you have now : I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion ; not that I always spent so much, but I gave myself leave to go so far, but no farther. So in all things else, appoint so much time for sleep, eating, company, &c. But above all things, my dear Sammy, I command you, I beg, I beseech you, to be very strict in observing the Lord's-day.—In all things endeavour to act upon principle, and do not live like the rest of mankind, who pass through the world like straws upon a river, which are carried which way the stream or wind drives them. Often put this question to yourself, Why do I this or that ? Why do I pray, read, study, use devotion ?, &c.—by which means you will come to such a steadiness and consistency in your words and actions, as becomes a reasonable creature and a good christian.”—These observations were worthy of the mother, and they were properly regarded and followed by the son.

When he was senior scholar at Westminster, the Bishop of Rochester\* took him to his seat at Bromley in Kent, to read to him in the evenings. He was at this time eagerly pursuing his studies ; and this circumstance, which, for several reasons, would have been highly gratifying to many, was to him no small mortification. From this place he wrote a Latin letter to his father, in August 1710, in which he complains heavily of the Bishop for the interruption he gave him in his learning. An extract from this letter I shall insert below, † and give

\* The predecessor of Atterbury, who was not advanced to the See of Rochester till 1718.

† “ Ille mihi, et in sacris et in profanis rebus, semper erit infestissimus ; studia enim intermitti cogit, quibus pro virili incubueram. Ultimo anno in Collegio agendo, ubi non mihi seniori opus est amicorum hospitio, a studiis et a scholâ me detraxit ; non modo nullam ad utilitatem, sed ne ad minimam quidem vel utilitatis vel voluptatis speciem me vocavit. Ipse hodie foras est, aliter vix otium foret quo has scriberem. Me ex omnibus discipulis elegit, ut perlegerem

the general purport of it in English. Speaking of the Bishop, he observes, “ He will always be exceedingly troublesome to me both in sacred and profane learning ; for he interrupts the studies to which I had applied with all my might. Last year, in the midst of our business in the College, he took me off both from study and from school, not only without any benefit, but without calling me to any thing which had even the appearance of either utility or pleasure. To-day he is from home, or I should scarcely have leisure to write this letter. He chose me from all the scholars,—me, who am hoarse and short-sighted, to read to him at night. I am glad you enjoy good health. I beg your’s and my mother’s blessing. I saw my grandmother\* in the last holidays ; in those which are approaching, I cannot, because I am detained by an *unfriendly* friend.”

He was about eighteen years old when he wrote this letter, and not then removed from school. We may observe in it marks of a strong mind, wholly devoted to the pursuit of classical knowledge : and, considering his age and situation at the time, it shews a progress in learning which does him credit.

His mother’s advice had a proper effect on his mind, and was the means of preserving him from vices too common to the youth of the place. He retained his sobriety, his reverence for God, and regard for religion. In December this year, he wrote to his mother ; and the following extract from his letter gives a pleasing view of his simplicity, and serious attention to the state of his own heart and the first motions of evil. “ I received the sacrament,” says he, “ the first

ei noctu libros ; me raucum, me *μωπᾶ*. Gaudeo vos valetudine bonâ frui. Tuam et maternam benedictionem oro. Episcopus jussit me illius in literis mentionem facere. Da veniam subitis. Aviam ultimis festis vidi ; his venientibus non possum, quia ab inimico amico detineor.”

\* The widow of Mr. John Wesley of New-Inn Hall, Oxford, and niece of Dr. Thomas Fuller. She had then been a widow near forty years.

Sunday of this month. I am unstable as water. I frequently make good resolutions, and keep them for a time, and then grow weary of the restraint. I have one grand failing, which is, that, having done my duty, I undervalue others, and think what wretches the rest of the College are compared with me. Sometimes in my relapses I cry out, ‘*Can the Æthiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, who are accustomed to do evil.*’ But I answer again, ‘*With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*’ Amen.”—Yet this good man opposed with all his might *that faith* which his brother afterwards preached, and which alone can save us from those corruptions!

The next year, 1711, he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford; \* and here, as well as at Westminster, he acquired the character of an excellent classic scholar. But his mind was too large, and his zeal for religion and the Established Church too ardent, to be confined within the bounds prescribed by the common exercises of the place.

The following letter shews that he took an active part in some of the principal questions agitated among the literati of that time. It is dated June 3, 1713, when he had been about two years at Oxford; and is addressed to the Honourable Robert Nelson, Esquire. He says, “I hoped, long ere this, to have perfected, as well as I could, my Dissertation on Ignatius, and gotten it ready for the press, when I came to town this year. But I found myself disappointed, at first, for some months, by my affairs in the East-India House, and since by my charity-hymns and other matters. I think I told you some time since, that I had laid materials together for a second discourse on that subject, directly against Mr. Whiston’s objections to the shorter and genuine copy of Ignatius; whereas my former was chiefly against the larger; because I

\* WELCH’S List, &c. page 95.

then thought, if that were proved interpolated, it would be readily granted that the other was the genuine. But having found, when Mr. Whiston's four volumes came out, that he had in the first of them laid together many objections against the shorter epistles, I set myself to consider them; and having now got Archbishop Usher, Bishop Pearson, and Dr Smyth, on that subject, and as carefully as I could perused them, I found that many of Mr. Whiston's objections were taken from Daillé, a few from the writings of the Socinians and modern Arians, though most of them from his own observations. These latter being new, and having not appeared when Bishop Pearson or the others wrote, could not be taken notice of by them; and, being now published in the English language, may seduce some well-meaning persons, and persuade them that the true Ignatius was of the same pinion with the Arians, (whereas I am sure he was as far from it as light is from darkness,) and that the rather because there has been as yet no answer, that I know of, published to them, though they were printed in the year 1711. I know many are of opinion, it is best still to slight him and take no notice of him. This I confess is the most easy way, but cannot tell whether it will be safe in respect to the common people, or will tend so much to the honour of our church and nation. Of this, however, I am pretty confident, that I can prove all his main objections, whether general or particular, against the shorter copy, to be notoriously false. Such as that p. 86, 87, 'That the smaller so frequently call Christ God,' which he says was done to serve the turn of the Athanasians, and cannot in reason be supposed to be an omission in the larger, but must be interpolation in the smaller: whereas I find that the smaller call him God but fifteen times, the larger eighteen, and if we take in those to Antioch and Tarsus, twenty-two times, for an obvious reason.

“ Again, he says. p. 64, that serious exhortations to practical, especially domestic duties, are in the larger only, being

to a surprising degree omitted in the smaller. But I have collected above one hundred instances wherein these duties are most pressingly recommended in the smaller.

“ But what he labours most, is to prove, that the first quotations in Eusebius, and others of the ancients, are agreeable to the larger, not the smaller; whereas, on my tracing and comparing them all, as far as I have had opportunity, I have found this assertion to be a palpable mistake, unless in one quotation from the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*, or *Paschale*. I would gladly see *Montfaucon de causâ Marcelli*, *St. Basil contra Marcellum*, observations on Pearson’s *Vindiciæ*, and some good account of the Jewish *Scphiroth*; because I think the Gnostics, Basilidians, and Valentinians, borrowed many of their Æons from them, since they have the same names; and this perhaps might give further light to the famous ΣΙΓΗ of Ignatius; for the clearing whereof Bishop Pearson, Dr. Bull, and Grotius have so well laboured.”

This letter shews the spirit and zeal of Mr. Wesley for sound doctrine, and does credit to so young a student. When he had taken his Master’s degree, he was sent for, to officiate as Usher at Westminster School; and soon afterwards he took orders, under the patronage of Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and Dean of Westminster. He was exemplary in discharging the various duties of life, and did honour to his profession as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel. He had the nicest sense of honour and integrity; and the utmost abhorrence of duplicity and falsehood. He was humane and charitable; not only administering to the wants of the poor and afflicted, as far as his income would permit, but also using his influence with others to procure them relief. In filial affection and duty to his parents, he was remarkable; no man in the same circumstances ever shone brighter in this branch of Christian duty, through the whole course of his life.

His political principles are strongly apparent in the following Poetical Epistle to the second Earl of Oxford, son of the famous Harley, Prime Minister to Queen Anne. The original, in his own hand-writing, is before me : I believe, it was never before published. We see in it the firm friend of Atterbury, and of Harley ; the loyal man, and yet the “ unbending Tory.”

TO THE EARL OF OXFORD, ON HIS NOT APPEARING AT ST. JAMES'S,  
ON KING GEORGE THE SECOND'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

WHILE thick to Court transported Tories run,  
Spurn'd by the Sire, and smil'd on by the Son ;  
Freed from an Iron Reign's continued curse,  
Expecting better, and secure from worse ;  
Beyond their principles, now *passive* grown,  
They lick the spittle which the Whigs have thrown ;  
Embrace the authors of their former tears,  
Forgetting, in an hour, the spoil of years :  
Reserv'd and silent, you at distance stand,  
Nor haste to kiss the oft-extended hand.

Their compliments and hopes let others shew ;  
And if they will be laugh'd at—be it so.

So George, ascending his imperial throne,  
With decent grief, a Father may bemoan ;  
Let not his partial greatness e'er require,  
That duteous Oxford should neglect a Sire :  
A Sire, who left an heritage more fair,  
Than hoarded wealth, or sceptres, to his heir.  
An Harley seldom treads this mortal stage,  
But Kings and misers rise in every age.  
He us'd for public good the public store,  
Still daring to be just, and to be poor.  
Firm to his country's and religion's cause,  
True to our ancient faith and ancient laws,  
He due regard to learning's seats profest ;  
Nor aw'd with threat'nings, nor with troops oppress.  
Skilful through suppliant crowds to force his way,  
And call retiring merit into day,  
No narrow views his mighty soul confin'd,  
Friend to the world, and Patron to mankind !

He join'd, in glorious peace, contending Kings,  
 And pluck'd the Austrian Eagle's spreading wings.  
 He knew the rage of faction's tide to stem ;  
 He gave the Brunswick race their diadem.  
 Grav'd in your bosom, let his image dwell,  
 Great while he stood, but greater when he fell.  
 Fearless, serene, he look'd on danger nigh :  
 Let Harcourt double, and let St. John \* fly ;  
 Against the storm he turn'd his steady face,  
 And scorn'd the shelter of an Act of Grace.  
 Others by mean retreat their gains insure,  
 Conscious they need the pardons they procure.  
 'Twas vain, O George, that mercy to refuse  
 Which Oxford could not want, and would not use,—  
 T'except his name, who, faithful to thy line,  
 Amongst the British Kings inserted thine !  
 What Prince so vast a benefit would own ?  
 Thou could'st not pardon, for he gave thy Crown.  
 Fairly rewarded he, to death pursu'd !  
 O glorious act of German gratitude !

To greet *their* power how nobly you disdain'd,  
 Who strove with Oxford's murder to be stain'd !  
 To George with supple fawning scorn to bow,—  
 Persist ; remember *you* are Oxford now !  
 Faithful, but never *cringing*, to the Throne,—  
 Forgive *his* father—nor forget *your* own.

The reader who is acquainted with the party-feuds of that day, will not be surprised to hear, that he was deprived of his right to succeed as Second Master at Westminster. On a vacancy, when it was thought no man should be preferred before him, his intimacy with the Earl of Oxford, Bishop Atterbury, and Mr. Pope, and the frequent exertions of his wit against Sir Robert Walpole, the Minister of that day, prevented his advancement. The ostensible reason given, was *his being married*, which caused him to send an elegant poetical compliment to his wife, glorying in his fault, and refusing to repent.

\* Lord Bolingbroke.

He was unhappily prejudiced against some of the highest truths of the Gospel. Many of the Dissenters had insisted on those great truths: but he, having been educated in the highest Church principles, had inadvertently imbibed a dislike to those very truths themselves, because they were so zealously enforced out of the pale of the Church, although they are so plainly taught in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England.\* Some of his Letters to his brother John are still extant, and evince a most determined disapprobation of *the New Faith*, as he is pleased to term “the knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins.” He published a quarto volume of Poems, some of which were of considerable merit. “The Battle of the Sexes,” which was suggested to him by a paper in the Guardian, has been much admired. I shall give specimens of his abilities for English and Latin Poetry.

His Political Poetry, as we may term it, did not, perhaps could not, generally please; but his Religious Poetry made rich amends. The subjoined specimen of his skill in Latin Poetry is excellent. The following paraphrase of Isaiah xl, 6, as quoted by St. Peter, in his first Epistle, chap. i, 24, is also truly admirable.

ON DR. ALDRICH, DEAN OF CHRIST-CHURCH, OXON.

CUM subit illius lætissima frontis imago,

Quem nostri toties explicuere sales:

Cum subit et canum caput, et vigor acer ocelli,†

\* Dr. Whitehead seems to have been much offended at this assertion, and says, “If it were true, it would shew him to be a man almost void of principle.” It was true, however: and true, at one time, of the whole family. Mr. John Wesley says the same thing of himself. In that account his words are, “I had been long since taught to construe away all those Scriptures relating to this, [viz. to the sense of forgiveness,] and to call all those *Presbyterians* who spoke otherwise.”

† The Doctor’s eyes, as Mr. J. Wesley informed me, were remarkably small, which was the reason of Mr. S. Wesley’s use of the *diminutive*.



Et digna mistus cum gravitate lepos :  
 Solvimur in lachrymas, et inania munera versus  
 Ad tumulum sparsis fert Elegia comis.  
 Aldricio, debent cui munera tanta Camœnæ,  
 Hoc tribuisse parum est, non tribuisse scelus.

The following translation may give some faint idea of the original, though it falls far short of it.

THAT cheerful aspect when we call to mind,  
 So often smiling at our artless verse ;  
 That mirth with serious dignity combin'd,  
 That vivid piercing eye, those silver hairs ;—  
 We melt in tears, and pensively bestow  
 (Vain presents !) all we have, our grateful lays.  
 Small to give this to whom so much we owe !  
 Yet sin it were this trophy not to raise.

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#### ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG LADY.

*“ All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.”*

THE morning flowers display their sweets,  
 And gay their silken leaves unfold,  
 As careless of the noon-tide heats,  
 And fearless of the evening cold.

Nipt by the wind's unkindly blast,  
 Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,  
 The momentary glories waste,  
 The short-lived beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,  
 When youth its pride of beauty shews :  
 Fairer than spring the colours shine,  
 And sweeter than the virgin-rose.

Or worn by slowly-rolling years,  
 Or broke by sickness in a day,  
 The fading glory disappears,  
 The short-lived beauties die away.

Yet these, new rising from the tomb,  
 With lustre brighter far shall shine ;

Revive with ever-during bloom,  
Safe from diseases and decline.

Let sickness blast, let death devour,  
If heaven must recompense our pains ;  
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,  
If firm the word of God remains !

Mr. Samuel Wesley's High Church principles led him to disapprove of the conduct of his brothers, Mr. John and Charles Wesley, when they became Itinerant preachers. Several letters passed between him and his brother John, both on the doctrine which he taught, and on his manner of teaching it. I shall have an opportunity of considering some of these letters, when I come to that period of Mr. John Wesley's Life in which he and his brother Charles became Itinerants.

Mr. S. Wesley was in a bad state of health, some time before he left Westminster : and it was not much improved by his removal to Tiverton. On the night of the 5th of November, 1739, he went to bed, seemingly as well as usual ; was taken ill about three in the morning ; and died at seven, after about four hours' illness. But the following letter will state the circumstances more minutely. It was written to the late Mr. Charles Wesley :

“ TIVERTON, Nov. 14, 1739.

“ REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“ Your brother and my dear friend, (for so you are sensible he was to me,) on Monday, the 5th of Nov. went to bed, as he thought, as well as he had been for some time before ; was seized about three o'clock in the morning very ill, when your sister immediately sent for Mr. Norman, and ordered the servant to call me. Mr. Norman came as quick as he possibly could, but said, as soon as he saw him, that he could not get over it, but would die in a few hours. He was not able to take any thing, nor able to speak to us, only YES or NO to a question asked him ; and that did not last half an hour. I never went from his bed-side till he expired, which was about

seven the same morning. With a great deal of difficulty we persuaded your dear sister to leave the room before he died. I trembled to think how she would bear it, knowing the sincere affection and love she had for him. But, blessed be God, He hath heard and answered prayer on her behalf, and, in a great measure, calmed her spirit, though she has not yet been out of her chamber. Your brother was buried on Monday last, in the afternoon, and is gone to reap the fruit of his labours. I pray God we may imitate him in all his virtues, and be prepared to follow. I should enlarge much more, but have not time; for which reason I hope you will excuse him, who is under the greatest obligations to be, and really is, with the greatest sincerity,

“ *Yours in all things,*

“ AMOS MATTHEWS.”

Mr. S. WESLEY, Jun. was of a benevolent temper, which he cultivated upon principle. He was one of the projectors, and a very careful and active promoter, of the first Infirmary set up at Westminster, for the relief of the sick and needy, in 1719; and he had the satisfaction to see it flourish,\* and to propagate by its example, under the prudent management of other good persons, many pious establishments of the same kind in distant parts of the nation.

The following extracts of letters from his patron, Bishop Atterbury, are too much to his honour not to be mentioned here; they were occasioned by that fine poem, printed in his works, *on the Death of Mrs. Morice*, his Lordship's daughter.

“ *April 24, 1730.*

“ I have received a poem from Mr. Morice, which I must be insensible not to thank you for,—your Elegy on the death of Mrs. Morice. I cannot help an impulse upon me, to tell you under my own hand, the satisfaction I feel, the appro-

\* It is now St. George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner.

bation I give, the envy I bear you, for this good work ; as a poet and as a man, I thank you, I esteem you."

"PARIS, *May* 27, 1730.

"I am obliged to W for what he has written on my dear child ; and take it the more kindly, because he could not hope for my being ever in a condition to reward him, though, if ever I am, I will ; for he has shewn an invariable regard for me all along in all circumstances ; and much more than some of his acquaintance, who had ten times greater obligations."

"PARIS, *June* 30, 1730.

"The verses you sent me touched me very nearly, and the Latin in the front of them as much as the English that followed. There are a great many good lines in them, and they are writ with as much affection as poetry. They came from the heart of the author, and he has a share of mine in return ; and if ever I come back to my country with honour, he shall find it."

These extracts do honour to the feelings of Atterbury as a man ; and they give a noble testimony to the disinterested and unchangeable friendship of Mr. S. Wesley for a person whom he esteemed, and whom he thought deeply injured.

The following inscription on his grave-stone, in the church-yard at Tiverton, well expresses his character, and, I believe, does not exceed the truth :—

HERE LIE INTERRED

THE REMAINS OF THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, A. M.

Some time Student of Christ Church, Oxon :

A man, for his uncommon wit and learning,

For the benevolence of his temper,

And simplicity of manners,

Deservedly beloved and esteemed by all.

An excellent Preacher ;

But whose best sermon

Was, the constant example of an edifying life.

So continually and zealously employed

In acts of beneficence and charity,  
 That he truly followed  
 His blessed Master's example,  
*In going about doing good.*  
 Of such scrupulous integrity,  
 That he declined occasions of advancement in the world,  
 Through fear of being involved in dangerous compliances,  
 And avoided the usual ways to preferment  
 As studiously as many others seek them.  
 Therefore, after a life spent  
 In the laborious employment of teaching youth,  
 First, for near twenty years,  
 As one of the Ushers in Westminster School ;  
 Afterwards, for seven years,  
 As Head Master of the Free-School at Tiverton,  
 He resigned his soul to God,  
 Nov. 6, 1739, in the 49th year of his age.

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We have now taken a view of the WESLEY FAMILY, and when their situation and circumstances are considered, they will appear, I believe, second to none of whom we have any clear record, either for learning, moral worth, or sincere piety. Their religion, however, must be estimated according to the day in which they lived. The real excellence of the Puritan dispensation had nearly passed away, and little remained of it that was uncontaminated with Antinomianism. The first Puritans were eminent for holiness in all its branches; but the spurious race that followed were chiefly noted for turbulent zeal and a canting hypocrisy, that brought all true religion, in its life and power, into contempt. Their ambition also was manifest, and the nation felt it. It acted with an energy that seemed truly judicial, and succeeded even to the overthrowing both of the Church and the State.

The real Puritans, (allowing the nick-name,) had suffered like their Master, remembering his word, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay.*" He did, indeed, terribly repay the despisers of religion. By the Antinomian descendants of his persecuted followers, he awfully avenged the cause of those who had,

*in well-doing, and patient suffering, committed themselves to Him who judgeth righteously. Thus God ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.*

The Gospel, however, was disgraced, and the truly pious were offended; and though we are certainly, (through Him who always brings good out of evil,) indebted to that awful misrule for much of our civil and religious liberty, yet the wound then inflicted on vital godliness has not been fully healed unto this day.

The Wesley family, settled at Epworth, had imbibed this spirit of offence, with a considerable portion of contempt for those who still professed this *Puritanical* or *Presbyterian Faith*, as it was then called; although it was, in substance, the very faith of the Gospel, and of the Church of England. The family were eminent for learning, and sound in the faith, that is, in the doctrines of Christianity; but they were strangers to the living faith of the Gospel, not one of the family even professing any thing of the kind. The excellent mother, indeed, had an early knowledge of it from her pious father, who died in the full triumph of that faith. This might have led her to the possession of that *pearl of great price*; but other sentiments were entertained, which damped the real work divine. Like the first believers at Ephesus, the family knew only the baptism or dispensation of John, and needed to be taught, even by the unlearned, *the way of God more perfectly*. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, especially as being the privilege of all believers, was then but seldom mentioned. A *legalised* Gospel, that gave full employment to the understanding, but left the heart cold and unrenewed, was the fashionable Gospel of that day. The teaching was generally like that which is found in SECKER'S Lectures to Candidates for the Ministry.—“Gentlemen,” says that pious divine, “I have no fear concerning your FAITH, but I greatly fear lest you should not have REPENTANCE.” Such theology as this was not calculated to

abase the sinner, or to *create him anew in Christ Jesus*. *Impenitent faith* is certainly not the faith whereby, as our church teaches, a sinner is justified before God, and by it *alone*; nor can it be *the faith of God's elect*; nor can it produce *righteousness, peace, and joy*; nor can a repentance, grounded on such a faith, be *repentance unto life*. We need not wonder, therefore, that when the true doctrine of faith came into the family, it should be looked upon, as Mr. Gambold observes, as a downright robber. "If you speak of faith," observes that pious theologian, "in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the uttermost,—a most universal help and refuge,—in such a manner as takes away all glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we would before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance than we could before expect: If any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence, as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation."

The family were eventually thus divided; and not only about the true faith of the Gospel, by which we should learn from the Divine Author of it to be the friends of sinners, and to sit down on a level with them as soon as they begin to repent; but about that semblance of it, in its fruits and effects, which Mr. John Wesley had learned from Mr. Law, and other mystic writers, and inculcated in his latter visits to his father's house. When, as he informed me, he carried even this faith into the family, it seemed to turn the house upside down. "Never," said he, "did I see my mother so moved. Upon one occasion she said, with more appearance of anger than ever I saw in her before, '*Shall I be taught by a boy?*'" But his father exerted a more sturdy resistance; and when the son, from the height of his mystic elevation, would enforce the purity which he had learned from his contemplative friend, the old man desired him "*to get out of his house, with his APOSTOLICAL NOSTRUMS!*" They were not, indeed, APOSTOLICAL; for they had not the EVANGELICAL root,

I the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me !

This the whole family had yet to learn. Mr. Charles Wesley used to say, even in old age, " Mr. Law was our John the Baptist." He put them on a kind of penance, which thoroughly shewed them their own hearts, but which gave them no *victory* over sin ; no *peace* or *joy* in *believing*. The two brothers, however, held on their way, and became the Apostles, not only of their own family, but of the nation, yea, (and in a high sense,) of the world. I shall not, therefore, in this history, divide whom God thus joined, by considering Mr. Charles Wesley apart, or merely as one of the original stock ; but shall present him as *bound up* in the same *bundle of life* with his devoted brother. The day of faith, called by the world, and by worldly writers, " the day of enthusiasm," now swiftly approached ; that day, which was, chiefly through their ministry,

To fill the earth with golden fruit,  
With ripe millennial love.

The faith of the Gospel, though it could scarcely be seen in any of the existing religious communities, except in their forms or confessions, was not, however, extinct in the land. There were individuals at this time who enjoyed it in its peace, power, and purity. Two letters now lie before me which fully prove, that when Mr. Wesley shook the nation, by publicly declaring *that faith*, it was found to have its seat in the hearts of some whom the Lord knew, though they were unknown to man. We have heard Mr. Wesley breathing out his soul in those words,

Ah ! join me to thy secret ones !  
Ah ! gather all thy living stones !

And we have seen the fabled power of Amphion's lyre gloriously realised. These living stones were drawn by the music of " *that only name given unto men whereby they can be saved.*" They gathered round the standard of truth when



they saw it exalted, and comforted the heart of the Lord's servant, who had the boldness to raise it up even in the high-ways. These letters were written in the year 1738, after Mr. Wesley had attained to the true faith of the Gospel, and was labouring to propagate it in the face of all manner of reproach and opposition. They describe the same work of grace, as having been experienced by the writer eighteen years before, when the Wesley family were either totally ignorant of any such faith, or deeply prejudiced against it.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND, whom I love in the truth,

“ Grace be with you, and peace from God our Father, in our Lord Jesus Christ. I protest by the rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus my Lord, I die daily to myself, and grow stronger and stronger in the power of my Saviour's resurrection. The refreshments that come from his presence into my soul, satisfy it, as it were, with marrow and fatness. I know my Saviour's voice, and my heart burns with love and desire to *follow him in the regeneration, having no confidence in the flesh*. I loath myself, and love him only. My dear brother, my spirit even at this moment rejoices in God my Saviour; and *the love, which is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost*, so destroys all self-love, that I could lay down my life for the good of my brethren. May Jesus remember you, now he is in his kingdom; for he quickeneth whomsoever he will, and has now *power upon earth to forgive sins*. *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, and have confidence towards God, that, through his blood, my sins are forgiven. He has begotten me again, and loves and delivers me from the power of sin, so that it has no dominion over me. *His spirit bears witness with my spirit*, that I am *his child by adoption and grace*. And this is *not for works of righteousness which I have done*, for *I am his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; so that all boasting is excluded. I was *found of him that sought him not*; and of this I am confident, that whoso-

*ever cometh to him, he will in no wise cast him out.* It is now about eighteen years since Jesus took possession of my heart. He then opened my eyes, and said unto me, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven*; and since that time, the whole bent of my will has been towards him, night and day, even in my dreams! By abiding in him I am more than conqueror, (through his strengthening me,) over those corruptions which before I was always a slave to. I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them yet. *The Comforter will lead you into all truth*, and his unction will shew you far, far greater things than the most exalted wisdom of man can attain to. *Now the God of peace, which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; to him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus.* May you, and all those who wait for his appearing, find the consolation of Israel! This is the earnest prayer of

“Your affectionate brother in Christ,

“WILLIAM FISH.”

The second letter was evidently written in answer to some enquiries made by Mr. Wesley.

“LONDON, Dec. 5th, 1738.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I cannot but acknowledge that my joys are sometimes abated by sorrow; but then my sorrow is after a godly sort, so that I must not say my joys are interrupted: For although *heaviness endures for a night*, unspeakable *joy cometh in the morning*. I am always in a habitual disposition for prayer, though I have not always the same fervency in prayer. I can *in every thing*, without exception, *give thanks*; especially as troubles and afflictions have abounded, so, in an extraordinary degree, consolations in Christ have abounded also. My dear friend, bear with my narration after what manner I was born

of God. It was an instantaneous act. My whole heart was filled with a divine power, a joy unspeakable, drawing all the faculties of my soul after Christ, which continued three or four nights and days. It was as a mighty rushing wind coming into the soul, enabling me from that moment to be more than conqueror over those lusts and corruptions which, before that time, I was enslaved to. It is a salvation beyond what we can express. I know *I dwell in Christ and Christ in me. I am bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.* And what shall I say? O that I were dissolved, that I might be with him where he is! But I will wait till he summons me hence; for his time is best. O that I might have my request, and that God would grant the thing that I long for! viz. that you and all that desire ‘*The Beloved,*’ may be espoused to him, and receive the earnest of that *inheritance which is incorruptible and fadeth not away, reserved for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in these last times.*

“Your sincere friend and brother in Christ,  
“WILLIAM FISH.”

These letters must have greatly strengthened Mr. Wesley in the faith which he received after his return from America, chiefly through the instrumentality of Peter Boehler. He saw by them, that the true faith of the Gospel was in England a long time before it was presented to him by the Moravian Missionaries. He saw also in these letters the reality of that faith, which is described in the Seventeenth Article of the Church of England, and in her Communion Service. They must also have greatly helped him to resist those Antinomian attacks, by which that faith was assailed soon after its re-appearance. They shew that the true *witness of the Spirit*, without which there can be no deliverance from guilt, always proves its divine origin by its holy fruits.

# THE LIFE

OF THE

## REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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### BOOK THE SECOND.

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#### CHAPTER I.

THE LIFE OF THE REVEREND JOHN WESLEY, FROM HIS BIRTH TO THE YEAR 1735; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS BROTHER, THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY.

MR. JOHN WESLEY was the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, and born at Epworth in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June 1703, O. S. There has indeed been some variation in the accounts given of his age by different persons of the family; but the certificate of it, sent him by his father a little before he was ordained priest, to satisfy the Bishop concerning his age, puts the matter beyond a doubt.

*“Epworth, August 23, 1728.*

“John Wesley, M. A. Fellow of Lincoln-College, was twenty-five years old the 17th of June last, having been baptized a few hours after his birth, by me,

“SAMUEL WESLEY, Rector of Epworth.”

When he was nearly six years old, a calamity happened which threatened him, and indeed the whole family, with

destruction. By accident, as all that have written concerning it have supposed, but according to his own account, by the wickedness of some of his father's parishioners, who could not bear the plain dealing of so faithful and resolute a pastor, the parsonage-house was set on fire.

The following anecdote, related to me by Mr. John Wesley, will throw some light upon this event. Many of his father's parishioners gave him much trouble about the tythes. At one time they would only pay in kind. Going into a field, upon one of those occasions, where the tythe-corn was laid out, Mr. Wesley found a farmer very deliberately at work with a pair of shears, cutting off the ears of corn and putting them into a bag which he had brought with him for that purpose. Mr. Wesley said not any thing to him, but took him by the arm and walked with him into the town. When they got into the market-place, Mr. Wesley seized the bag, and, turning it inside out before all the people, told them what the farmer had been doing. He then left him, with his pilfered spoils, to the judgment of his neighbours, and walked quietly home.

A letter from Mrs. Susannah Wesley to the Rev. Mr. Hoole, gives the best account of this calamitous fire. It is dated August 24, 1709.

“REV. SIR,

“My master is much concerned that he was so unhappy as to miss of seeing you at Epworth; and he is not a little troubled that the great hurry of business, about building his house, will not afford him leisure to write. He has therefore ordered me to satisfy your desire as well as I can, which I shall do by a simple relation of matters of fact, though I cannot at this distance of time recollect every calamitous circumstance that attended our strange reverse of fortune. On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, our house took fire; by what accident, God only

knows. It was discovered by some sparks falling from the roof upon a bed, where one of the children (Hetty) lay, and burning her feet. She immediately ran to our chamber and called us; but I believe no one heard her; for Mr. Wesley was alarmed by a cry of FIRE in the street, upon which he rose, little imagining that his own house was on fire; but, on opening his door, he found it was full of smoke, and that the roof was already burnt through. He immediately came to my room, (as I was very ill, he lay in a separate room from me,) and bid me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly and shift for our lives, the house being all on fire. Then he ran and burst open the nursery-door, and called to the maid to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her; the three others in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bid the rest follow, which they did, except Jacky. When we were got into the hall, and saw ourselves surrounded with flames, and that the roof was on the point of falling, we concluded ourselves inevitably lost, as Mr. Wesley in his fright had forgot the keys of the doors above stairs. But he ventured up stairs once more, and recovered them, a minute before the stair-case took fire. When we opened the street-door, the strong north-east wind drove the flames in with such violence, that none could stand against them: Mr. Wesley, only, had such presence of mind as to think of the garden-door, out of which he helped some of the children; the rest got through the windows. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows; nor could I get to the garden-door. I endeavoured three times to force my passage through the street-door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour to preserve me, if it were his will, from that death; and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no further harm than a little scorching [of] my hands and face.

“ While Mr. Wesley was carrying the children into the garden, he heard the child in the nursery cry out miserably for help, which extremely affected him ; but his affliction was much increased, when he had several times attempted the stairs then on fire, and found they would not bear his weight. Finding it was impossible to get near him, he gave him up for lost, and kneeling down, he commended his soul to God, and left him, as he thought, perishing in the flames. But the boy seeing none come to his help, and being frightened, the chamber and bed being on fire, he climbed up to the casement, where he was soon perceived by the men in the yard, who immediately got up and pulled him out, just in the article of time that the roof fell in, and beat the chamber to the ground. Thus, by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, our lives were all preserved by little less than miracle ; for there passed but a few minutes between the first alarm of fire, and the falling of the house.”

Mr. John Wesley’s account of what happened to himself, varies a little from this relation given by his mother. “ I believe,” says he, “ it was just at that time (when they thought they heard him cry) I waked : for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly, as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains, and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no further, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed upon a chest which stood near the window : one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, ‘ there will not be time ; but I have thought of another expedient. Here I will fix myself against the wall : lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders.’ They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the roof fell ; but it fell inward, or we

had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, ‘Come, neighbours ! let us kneel down ! let us give thanks to God ! He ‘has given me all my eight children : let the house go, I am ‘rich enough !’

“The next day, as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his Polyglott Bible, on which just these words were legible. *Vade ; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me. Go ; sell all that thou hast : and take up thy cross and follow me.*”

The memory of Mr. John Wesley’s escape is preserved in one of his early prints. Under his portrait there is a house in flames, with this inscription ; “*Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?*” He remembered this event ever after with the most lively gratitude, and more than once has introduced it in his writings.

The peculiar danger and wonderful escape of this child, excited a good deal of attention and enquiry at the time, especially among the friends and relations of the family. His brother Samuel, being then at Westminster, writes to his mother on this occasion in the following words, complaining that they did not inform him of the particulars. “I have not heard a word from the country, since the first letter you sent me after the fire. I am quite ashamed to go to any of my relations. They ask me, ‘whether my father means to leave ‘Epworth? whether he is building his house? whether he has ‘lost all his books and papers? if nothing was saved? what ‘was the lost child? a boy or a girl? what was its name?’ &c. To all which I am forced to answer, I cannot tell; I do not know; I have not heard—I have asked my father some of these questions, but am still an ignoramus.”

All the children received the first rudiments of learning from their mother, who, as we have seen, was admirably qualified for this office in her own family. There is no evi-



dence that the boys were ever put to any school in the country, their mother having a very bad opinion of the common methods of instructing and governing children. But she was not only attentive to their progress in learning, she likewise endeavoured to give them, as early as possible, just and useful notions of religion. Her mind seems to have been led to a more than ordinary attention to her son John in this respect. In one of her private meditations, when he was near eight years old, she mentions him, in a manner that shews how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. I shall transcribe the whole meditation for the benefit of the reader.

“EVENING, MAY 17, 1711.—SON JOHN.

“What shall I render to the Lord for his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer, is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am even ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice.

“I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me; and I would resolve, (O give me grace to do it,) that the residue of my life shall be all devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion, and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success.” Her good endeavours were not without the desired effect.

In the month of April 1712, he had the small-pox, together with four others of the children. His father was then in London, to whom his mother writes thus: “Jack has bore his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint; though he seemed angry at the small-pox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking

sourly at them, for he never said any thing." In 1714, he was placed at the Charter-house, with that eminent scholar, Dr. Walker, the Head-Master, and became a favourite on account of his sobriety and application. Ever after, he retained a remarkable predilection for that place, and was accustomed to walk through it once a year during his annual visit in London. He had some reasons however to complain of the usage he received at the Charter-house. Discipline was so exceedingly relaxed, that the boys of the higher forms were suffered to eat up, not only their own portions of animal food, but those also which were allowed to the lesser boys. By this means he was limited, for a considerable part of the time he remained at that school, to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. One thing he observed, which contributed among others to his general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution,—and that was, his invariable attention to a strict command of his father, that he should run round the Charter-house garden, which was of considerable extent, three times every morning.

In 1719, when his father was hesitating in what situation he should place Charles, his brother Samuel writes thus concerning John: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar." Two or three months afterwards he mentions him again, in a letter to his father: "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

He was now sixteen, and the next year was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. Here he pursued his studies with great advantage, I believe under the direction of Dr. Wigan, a gentleman eminent for his classical knowledge. Mr. Wesley's natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour. When he was about twenty-one years of age, "he appeared," as Mr. Badcock has observed, "the very sensible and acute collegian—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly senti-

ments.”\* His perfect knowledge of the classics gave a smooth polish to his wit, and an air of superior elegance to all his compositions. He had already begun to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, though most of his poetical pieces at this period, were, I believe, either imitations or translations of the Latin. Some time in this year, however, he wrote an imitation of the 65th Psalm, which he sent to his father, who says, “I like your verses on the 65th Psalm, and would not have you bury your talent.”

In the summer of this year, his brother, Mr. Samuel Wesley, broke his leg; and, when he was recovering, wrote to Mr. John Wesley at Oxford, informing him of his misfortune. His answer is dated the 17th of June, when he was just twenty-one years of age. The letter shews his lively and pleasant manner of writing when young.

“I believe,” says he, “I need not use many arguments to shew I am sorry for your misfortune, though at the same time I am glad, you are in a fair way of recovery. If I had heard of it from any one else, I might probably have pleased you with some impertinent consolations; but the way of your relating it is a sufficient proof, that they are what you don’t stand in need of. And indeed, if I understand you rightly, you have more reason to thank God that you did not break both, than to repine because you have broke one leg. You have undoubtedly heard the story of the Dutch seaman, who having broke one of his legs by a fall from the main-mast, instead of condoling himself, thanked God that he had not broke his neck. I scarce know whether your first news vexed me, or your last news pleased me, more: but I can assure you, that though I did not cry for grief at the former, I did for joy at the latter part of your letter. The two things which I most wished for of almost any thing in the world, were to see my mother, and Westminster once again; and to see them both together, was so far above my expectations, that I almost

\* Westminster Magazine.

looked upon it as next to an impossibility. I have been so very frequently disappointed when I had set my heart on any pleasure, that I will never again depend on any before it comes. However, I shall be obliged to you if you will tell me, as near as you can, how soon my uncle is expected in England,\* and my mother in London."

To this letter Dr. Whitehead has appended some amatory lines, which, he says, "afford a specimen of the writer's abilities to give a beautiful and elegant dress to verses intended as RIDICULE." This palliative phrase is contradicted by the lines themselves, which undoubtedly have not the least appearance of being "intended as RIDICULE." What the Doctor's motives might have been for granting them a place in his "Life of Mr. Wesley," it is difficult to conjecture; but if, with the greatest stretch of charity, we can suppose it possible for them to have been inserted with an intention to enhance Mr. Wesley's character, few men will venture to call the publication of them either candid or judicious. The sinister purposes to which they are capable of being applied by men of perverse minds, are shewn by Mr. Nightingale, in his "Portraiture of Methodism," who, with great injustice, quotes them as a standard of Mr. Wesley's talents for poetry, and a serious drawback on his piety. His reflections upon this juvenile production are, "that Mr. Wesley was not "quite that dark, saturnine creature which Archbishop Her-ring took him to be; and that he was not then so Methodistical, as at a subsequent period of his life." The distress of Mr. Nightingale's own mind, and the compunctious visitings of his conscience, for having published these and similar unfounded remarks upon Mr. Wesley and his friends, are

\* The uncle here mentioned was his mother's only brother. He was in the service of the East India Company; and the public prints having stated, that he was returning home in one of the Company's ships, Mrs. Wesley came to London when the ship arrived, to meet him. But the information was false, and she was disappointed.—*Private Papers*. I shall notice this brother in a subsequent part of these Memoirs.

well described in the frank and penitent confession which he made in the immediate prospect of death, and which, at his urgent request, my excellent friend Mr. Bunting inserted in “the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,” for November 1823. In alluding to these circumstances, I have no other object in view, than to vindicate Mr. Wesley’s memory, and to guard the public against the insinuations which have been artfully conveyed respecting a man, who, even in his unregenerate condition, was remarkable for chaste conversation and correct moral conduct.

On perusing the narrative both of Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Nightingale, the learned reader will at once perceive, that neither of them had enjoyed the advantages of an early classical education, and that they were consequently unacquainted with the course of studies usually pursued at our Universities. Dr. Whitehead, indeed, subsequently took a degree in Medicine at the University of Leyden; but, to obtain a MEDICAL diploma, a student is not required to exhibit that extensive knowledge of classic lore which is indispensable for securing him a degree either in ARTS or DIVINITY. Omitting any allusion to the objectionable passages, which are of occasional occurrence in the ancient Classic Poets of Greece and Rome,—and which are, promiscuously with others, translated into English verse, by the young men in our great public schools and Universities, merely as a trial of skill without adverting to the moral turpitude of some of the sentiments, or to their probable desecrating effect,—it may be observed, that the verses quoted by Dr. Whitehead were a college-exercise of this description, and translated by Mr. Wesley from the Latin. Such exercises were more common in those days, and for a century preceding, than they are at present. The youthful and witty translator, it is seen, was then only in his twenty-first year, and had not felt those deep convictions of the sinfulness of his nature which he afterwards endured. The real CHRISTIANITY, or “METHODISM of his

subsequent life," therefore, was not in the least implicated in this juvenile effusion. Making no pretensions to purer principles, or to a stricter course of conduct, than his college-friends, (to adopt another of Mr. Nightingale's phrases,) at that period Mr. Wesley "thought it no sin to exercise his "talents in translating a Poem on *A favourite Flea, Chloe's rosy Cheek,*" &c. But though the verses contained no sentiment of an absolutely immoral complexion,—a favourable circumstance, which cannot be offered in excuse for the early sallies of wit of many collegians who have afterwards become as eminent for their piety as for their talents,\*—Mr. Wesley would, a few years afterwards, have been ashamed at the sight of them; and he certainly would never have supposed, that any man, who could present them to the public as one of his compositions, entertained a proper regard for his character, especially when that individual might, out of a multitude of other choice materials, have easily selected a better and more edifying "specimen of his poetical abilities."—But the wise designs of God's Providence, as proved by their results, were, that Mr. Wesley should soon be engaged in more ennobling and salutary studies than are implied in a scrupulous attention to the little prettinesses of poetic expression, and that he should gain brighter and more durable trophies than any which the whole course of human learning could bestow.

\* If every man, who, in the days of his unbridled boyhood, has written foolish or wicked verses, must ever afterwards be stigmatized for such acts of indiscretion; what will become of the fair fame of the pious Beza, the learned Grotius, the clever Du Moulin, and several others of equal eminence among our own countrymen? One of the able Latin pamphlets of Grotius contains a befitting and penitential apology for himself, in which many of his offending brethren would have heartily united: "How much do I wish, that all those excitements "to marriage and to wars had been destroyed! And that sacred poems, and such "as have a tendency to inculcate good morals and form correct habits, were the "sole productions that remained."—*Rivet. Apologet. Discussio.*

Toward the close of this year, Mr. Wesley began to think of entering into Deacon's Orders; and this led him to reflect on the importance of the ministerial office, the motives of entering into it, and the necessary qualifications for it. On examining the step he intended to take, through all its consequences to himself and others, it appeared of the greatest magnitude, and made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became more serious than usual, and applied himself with more attention to subjects of divinity. Some doubts arising in his mind on the motives which ought to influence a man in taking Holy Orders, he proposed them to his father, with a frankness that does great credit to the integrity of his heart. His father's answer is dated the 26th of January, 1725. "As to what you mention of entering into Holy Orders, it is indeed a great work, and I am pleased to find you think it so. As to the motives you take notice of, my thoughts are: if it is *no harm*\* to desire getting into that office, even as Eli's sons, '*to eat a piece of bread*;' yet, certainly, a desire and intention to lead a stricter life, and a belief that one should do so, is a better reason: Though this should, by all means, be begun before, or ten to one it will deceive us afterwards. But if a man be unwilling and undesirous to enter into Orders, it is easy to guess whether he can say so much as, with common honesty, that he trusts he is '*moved to it by the Holy Ghost*.' But the principal spring and motive, to which all the former should be only secondary, must certainly be the glory of God, and the service of his Church in the edification of our neighbour. And woe to him who, with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work!" He then mentions the qualifications necessary for Holy Orders, and answers a question which his son asked. "You ask me, which is the best commentary on the Bible? I answer, the Bible itself. For the several Paraphrases and Translations of it in the Polyglott, compared with the Origin-

\* I doubt this under the Christian dispensation.

nal, and with one another, are, in my opinion, to a honest, devout, industrious, and humble man, infinitely preferable to any comment I ever saw. But Grotius is the best, for the most part, especially on the Old Testament." He then hints to his son, that he thought it too soon for him to take Orders; and encourages him to work and write while he could. "You see," says he, "time has shaken me by the hand; and death is but a little behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left; and I bless God for them."

His mother wrote to him in February on the same subject, and seemed desirous that he should enter into Orders as soon as possible. "I think," says she, "the sooner you are a Deacon the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which, of all other studies, I humbly conceive to be the best for candidates for Orders."—"The alteration of your temper," says she, in the same letter, "has occasioned me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operations of God's Holy Spirit, that, by taking off your relish for earthly enjoyments, he may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious and close application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. If it be so, happy are you, if you cherish those dispositions! And now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary: All things besides are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears, than can be met with in a tragedy. This matter deserves great consideration by all, but especially by those designed for the ministry; who ought, above all things, to make their own calling and election sure,



lest “*after they have preached to others, they themselves should be cast away.*”

He began now to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity, and became more desirous of entering into Orders. He wrote twice to his father on this subject. His father answered him in March, and informed him, that he had changed his mind, and was then inclined that he should take Orders that summer: “But, in the first place,” says he, “if you love yourself or me, pray heartily.”

The books which, at this time, had the greatest influence on his mind, were *the Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis, and Bishop Taylor’s *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. He did not, indeed, implicitly receive every thing they taught; but they roused his attention to the whole spirit of the Christian religion. “He began to see, that true religion is seated in the heart, and that God’s law extends to all our thoughts, as well as words and actions.\* He was, however, very angry at Kempis for being too strict, though he then read him only in Dean Stanhope’s translation.”† This was a singular feature in Mr. Wesley’s character. Contrary to the disposition of most young men who have been educated in the habits of study, he was diffident of his own judgment; and this disposition is visible through the whole of his life. On this occasion, he consulted his parents, stated his objections to some things in Kempis, and asked their opinion. His letter is dated May 29. “I was lately advised,” says he, “to read Thomas a Kempis over, which I had frequently seen, but never much looked into before. I think he must have been a person of great piety and devotion; but it is my misfortune to differ from him in some of his main points. I cannot think, that when God sent us into the world, he had irreversibly decreed, that we should be perpetually miserable in it. If our taking up the cross imply our bidding adieu to

\* WESLEY’S Works, in 32 Volumes, vol. xxvi, p. 274.    † Ibid.

all joy and satisfaction, how is it reconcilable with what Solomon expressly affirms of religion, that *'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace?'* Another of his tenets is, that all mirth or pleasure is useless, if not sinful, and that nothing is an affliction to a good man—that he ought to thank God even for sending him misery. This, in my opinion, is contrary to God's design in afflicting us; for though he chasteneth those whom he loveth, yet it is in order to humble them. I hope, when you have time, you will give me your thoughts on these subjects, and set me right if I am mistaken."

His mother's letter, in answer to this, is dated June the 8th, in which she says, "I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth or pleasure, as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture.\* Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure, of the innocence or malignity of actions—take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind; that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

His father's letter is dated July 14. "As for Thomas a Kempis," says he "all the world are apt to strain either on one side or the other; but, for all that, mortification is still an indispensable Christian duty. The world is a Siren, and we must have a care of her: and if the *'young man'* will *'rejoice in his youth,'* yet let him take care that his joys be innocent; and, in order to this, remember, that *'for all these things God will bring him into judgment.'* I have only this to add of my friend and old companion, that, making some grains of

\* This is tender, yea awful ground. Kempis meant the mirth and pleasures of the world.

allowance, he may be read to great advantage; nay, that it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously without admiring, and I think in some measure imitating his heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion. But I reckon you have, before this, received your mother's letter, who has leisure to bount the matter to the bran."

He consulted his mother in another letter, dated June the 18th, on some things which he had met with in Bishop Taylor. "You have so well satisfied me," says he, "as to the tenets of Thomas a Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you once more on a more dubious subject. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say, that she would advise no one, very young, to read Dr. Taylor on Living and Dying. She added, that he almost put her out of her senses when she was fifteen or sixteen years old; because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances, in which I am doubtful; though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence." He then states, in reference to humility, that the Bishop says, "We must be sure, in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." And in treating of repentance he says, "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not: therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned."—"I take the more notice of this last sentence," says Mr. Wesley, "because it seems to contradict his own words in the next section, where he says, that by the Lord's Supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seeds of, an immortal nature.\* Now surely these graces are not of so

\* So the pious Bishop was, in some sense, an advocate for Sacramental Justification!—the great error of the present day. It is not likely, however, that he held it in the same way, in which it is now maintained.

little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not ; if we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, which he will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is, that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling ; and then undoubtedly, in this life, we are of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this ! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation ; and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble ? who can be saved ?”

His mother's answer is dated July 21. She observes, that though she had a great deal of business, was infirm, and but slow of understanding, yet it was a great pleasure to correspond with him on religious subjects, and if it might be of the least advantage to him, she should greatly rejoice. She then tells him, that what Dr. Taylor calls humility is not the virtue itself, but the accidental effects of it, which may in some instances, and must in others, be separated from it. She then proceeds to state her own ideas of humility.

“ Humility is the mean between pride, or an overvaluing ourselves, on one side, and a base abject temper, on the other. It consists in an *habitual disposition* to think meanly of ourselves ; which disposition is wrought in us by a true knowledge of God ; his supreme essential glory ; his absolute immense perfection of being ; and a just sense of our dependence upon him, and past offences against him ; together with a consciousness of our present infirmities and frailties,” &c. &c.

It is evident, that Dr. Taylor's work had not only affected Mr. Wesley's heart, but engaged him in the earnest pursuit of further knowledge. He therefore answered his mother's letter on the 29th of July ; and both this letter and the answer to it are worthy of being preserved ; the one as a specimen of his manner of reasoning at this early period of

life; and the other, as it affords some excellent practical observations. They are too long to be inserted here; I shall therefore only present the reader with an extract from each.

“You have much obliged me,” says he, “by your thoughts on Dr. Taylor, especially with respect to humility, which is a point he does not seem to me sufficiently to clear. As to absolute humility, consisting in a mean opinion of ourselves, considered with respect to God alone, I can readily join with his opinion. But I am more uncertain as to comparative, if I may so term it; and think some plausible reasons may be alleged to shew, it is not in our power, and consequently not a virtue, to think ourselves the worst in every company.

“We have so invincible an attachment to truth already perceived, that it is impossible for us to disbelieve it. A distinct perception commands our assent, and the will is under a moral necessity of yielding to it. It is not, therefore, in every case, a matter of choice, whether we will believe ourselves worse than our neighbour, or no; since we may distinctly perceive the truth of this proposition, *He is worse than I*; and then the judgment is not free. One, for instance, who is in company with a free-thinker, or other person signally debauched in faith and practice, cannot avoid knowing himself to be the better of the two;—these propositions extorting our assent: *An Atheist is worse than a believer—A man who endeavours to please God is better than he who defies Him.*

“If a true knowledge of God be necessary to absolute humility, a true knowledge of our neighbour should be necessary to comparative. But to judge one’s self the worst of all men, implies a want of such knowledge. No knowledge can be, where there is not certain evidence; which we have not, whether we compare ourselves with our acquaintance, or with strangers. In the one case, we have only imperfect evidence, unless we can see through the heart: in the other, we have none at all.

“ Again, this kind of humility can never be well-pleasing to God, since it does not flow from faith, without which it is impossible to please Him. Faith is a species of belief, and belief is defined ‘an assent to a proposition upon reasonable grounds.’ Without rational grounds there is therefore no belief, and consequently no faith.

“ That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins, as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so, if ever we apostatize; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance, till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded, we may know if we are now in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavours, and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity.\*

“ As I understand faith to be an assent to any truth upon rational grounds, I do not think it possible, without perjury, to swear I believe any thing, unless I have rational grounds for my persuasion. Now that which contradicts reason, cannot be said to stand on rational grounds; and such, undoubtedly, is every proposition which is incompatible with the Divine Justice or Mercy. I can therefore never say, I believe such a proposition; since it is impossible to assent upon reasonable evidence, where it is not in being.

“ What then shall I say of Predestination? An everlasting purpose of God to deliver some from damnation, does, I suppose, exclude all from that deliverance who are not chosen. And if it was inevitably decreed from eternity, that such a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none beside them, a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either the Divine Justice or Mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to

\* He saw *the blessing*, even at this time, but not *the way to attain it*.

everlasting misery? Is it just to punish man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice, which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion, is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the Divine Nature and Perfections.

“ I call faith, ‘an assent upon rational grounds ;’ because I hold Divine Testimony to be the most reasonable of all evidence whatever. Faith must necessarily, at length, be resolved into reason. God is true ; therefore, what he says is true: He hath said this ; therefore, this is true. When any one can bring me more reasonable propositions than these, I am ready to assent to them: till then, it will be highly unreasonable to change my opinion.”

Men would be apt to think, that such an intellect, so improved, and so disposed, would be *easily* led into all “ *the truth as it is in Jesus.*” But the contrary will be seen in these Memoirs. To bring such a mind to the simplicity of faith—to make it willing to lose its all and to find all in Christ, is indeed to remove a mountain ! But when brought to this, how mighty do we see that mind in operation ! how steadfast and unmoveable in all its actings !

We see, in this letter, how seriously Mr. Wesley had taken up the study of divinity ; and it is pleasing to observe, how early he adopted the opinion of General Redemption, which he so uniformly held, and so ably defended in the subsequent part of his life, without ever departing from *evangelical* truth.

His mother’s letter is dated August the 18th: “ You say, that I have obliged you by sending my thoughts of humility, and yet you do not seem to regard them in the least; but still dwell on that single point in Dr. Taylor, of thinking ourselves the worst in every company ; though the necessity of thinking so, is not inferred from my definition. I shall answer your arguments, after I have observed, that we differ in our notions of the virtue itself. You will have it consist in thinking meanly

of ourselves ; I, in a habitual disposition to think meanly of ourselves ; which I take to be more comprehensive, because it extends to all the cases wherein that virtue can be exercised, either in relation to God, ourselves, or our neighbour, and renders your distinction of absolute and comparative humility perfectly needless.

“ We may, in many instances, think very meanly of ourselves without being humble ; nay, sometimes our very pride will lead us to condemn ourselves ; as when we have said or done any thing that lessens that esteem of men which we earnestly covet. As to what you call absolute humility, with respect to God, what great matter is there in it ? Had we only a mere speculative knowledge of that awful Being, and only considered Him as the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe ; yet, since that first notion of him implies that he is a God of absolute and infinite perfection and glory, we cannot contemplate that glory, or conceive him present, without the most exquisite diminution of ourselves before him. \*

“ The other part of your definition I cannot approve, because I think all those comparisons are rather the effects of pride than of humility.

“ Though truth is the object of the understanding ; and all truths, as such, agree in one common excellence, yet there are some truths which are comparatively of so small value, because of little use, that it is no matter whether we know them or not. Among these I rank the right answer to your question, whether our neighbour or we be worse. Of what importance can this inquiry be to us ? Comparisons in these cases are very odious, and do most certainly proceed from

\* But this is not the humility of a sinner. An angel may be, and no doubt is, thus abased before God. But a sinner is a *condemned* creature ; the sentence of death is upon him, and if he is truly convinced of sin, he acknowledges, “ ’Tis just the sentence should take place.” A man cannot be *justified*, unless he is *thus* humbled. He cannot pass from death unto life, but by the consciousness of his guilt, and by pleading the Lord of Life, who died for him.—See Mr. Wesley’s Sermon on Matt. v, 3, 4.



some bad principle in those who make them. So far should we be from reasoning upon the case, that we ought not to permit ourselves to entertain such thoughts; but if they ever intrude, to reject them with abhorrence.

“Supposing, that, in some cases, the truth of that proposition, *My neighbour is worse than I*, be ever so evident, yet what does it avail? Since two persons, in different respects, may be better and worse than each other. There is nothing plainer than that a free-thinker, as a free-thinker, and an Atheist, as an Atheist, is worse in that respect than a believer, as a believer. But if that believer’s practice does not correspond to his faith, he is worse than an infidel.

“If we are not obliged to think ourselves the worst in every company, I am perfectly sure, that a man sincerely humble will be afraid to think himself the best in any. And though it should be his lot (for it can never be his choice) to fall into the company of notorious sinners; ‘*who makes thee to differ?*’ or ‘*what hast thou that thou hast not received?*’\* is sufficient, if well considered, to humble us, and silence all aspiring thoughts and self-applause; and may instruct us to ascribe our preservation from enormous offences to the sovereign grace of God, and not to our own natural purity or strength.

“You are somewhat mistaken in your notions of faith. All faith is an assent, but all assent is not faith. Some truths are self-evident, and we assent to them because they are so. Others, after a regular and formal process of reason, by way of deduction from some self-evident principle, gain our assent. This is not properly faith, but science. Some, again, we assent to, not because they are self-evident, or because we have attained the knowledge of them in a regular method, by a train of arguments; but because they have been revealed to us, either by God or man, and these are the proper objects of faith. The true measure of faith, is, the authority of the

\* According to the Gospel, ‘*there is no difference* naturally before God. “*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” (Rom. iii, 21.) The mighty difference is made by FAITH.

revealer, the weight of which always holds proportion to our conviction of his ability and integrity. Divine faith is an assent to whatever God has revealed to us, because he has revealed it."\*

It was impossible for Mr. Wesley to correspond with such a parent, and on such subjects, without being improved; and the effect of his present enquiries was deep and lasting. In reading Kempis, he tells us, that he had frequently much sensible comfort, such as he was an utter stranger to before. And the chapter in Dr. Taylor *on purity of intention*, convinced him of the necessity of being holy in heart, as well as regular in his outward deportment. Meeting likewise with a religious friend about this time, which he never had before, he began to alter the whole form of his conversation, and to set in earnest upon a *new life*. He communicated every week. He watched against all sin, whether in word or deed; and began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness.

Having now determined to devote himself wholly to God, his letters to his parents carried a savour of religion, which before they had wanted; this made his father say to him in a letter of August the 2d, "If you be but what you write, you and I shall be happy, and you will much alleviate my misfortune." He soon found that his son was not double-minded. The time of his Ordination now drew near. His father wrote to him on this subject, in a letter dated September the 7th, in which he says, "God fit you for your great work! Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy; towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father." In preparing for his Ordination, he found some scruples on his mind respecting the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed; \* which he

\* The remaining part of this Letter on Predestination is inserted in the *Arminian Magazine*, vol. i, page xxxvi, though with an error in the date.—How far may we go in the knowledge of the doctrine of faith, without having living faith!

proposed to his father, who afterwards gave him his opinion upon it. Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the ministerial office, he was ordained Deacon on Sunday the 19th of \*this month, by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford.

Mr. Wesley's Ordination supplied him with an additional motive to prosecute the study of Divinity; which he did, by directing his inquiries into the evidences and reasonableness of the Christian Religion. He wrote to his mother on this subject November the 3d, who, in her answer, dated the 10th, encourages him to persevere in such investigations without any fear of being injured by them. "I highly approve," says she, "of your care to search into the grounds and reasons of our most holy religion; which you may do, if your intention be pure, and yet retain the integrity of your faith. Nay, the more you study on that subject, the more reason you will find to depend on the veracity of God; inasmuch as your perception of him will be clearer, and you will more plainly discover the congruity there is between the ordinances and precepts of the gospel, and right reason.† Nor is it a hard matter to prove, that the whole system of Christianity is founded thereon."

But Mr. Wesley did not employ all his time in these studies. His private Diary shews how diligent he was in the study of the Classics, and other books in different branches of science, and in the performance of his academical exercises. The time also drew near when it was expected, that the election of a Fellow of Lincoln College would take place; with a view to which his friends had been exerting themselves in his

\* See his Sermon on the Trinity.

† If by *right reason* be meant, the reason of God, or the reasoning of the Eternal Mind, (if we may so speak of Him who reasons not,) Christianity is certainly founded thereon. But to the reason of *fallen* man, it is "*foolishness*:" and a man "*who would be wise, must thus become a fool*." Neither the admirable mother, nor her admirable son, was as yet thus wise.

favour all the summer.\* When Dr. Morley, the Rector, was spoken to on the subject, he said, "I will inquire into Mr. Wesley's character." He did so, and gave him leave to stand a candidate. He afterwards became his friend in that business, and used all the influence he had in his favour. His father in a letter of July says, "I waited on Dr. Morley, and found him more civil than ever. I will write to the Bishop of Lincoln again, and to your brother Samuel the next post. Study hard, lest your opponents beat you." In another letter, speaking of Dr. Morley, he says, "You are infinitely obliged to that generous man."

Mr. Wesley's uncommon seriousness, however, was against him; and he did not escape the banter and ridicule of his adversaries at Lincoln College, on this occasion. In reference to this, his father observes in a letter of August: "As for the Gentlemen Candidates you write of—does any body think, that the devil has no agents left? It is a very callow virtue, sure, that cannot bear being laughed at. I think our Captain and Master endured something more for us, before he entered into glory: and unless we follow his steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with him. Nor shall any who sincerely endeavour to serve him, either by turning others to righteousness, or keeping them stedfast in it, lose their reward."—And in his letter of October the 19th, he exhorts him to bear patiently what was said of him at Lincoln: "But be sure," says he, "never to return the like treatment to your enemy. You and I have hitherto done the best we could in that affair; do you continue to do the same, and rest the whole with Providence."

His mother writes to him on this occasion, more in the way of encouragement and caution: "If it be," says she, "a weak virtue that cannot bear being laughed at, I am sure it is a strong and well-confirmed virtue that can bear the test of

\* His father mentions it in his letter of the 26th of January, of this year.

a brisk buffoonery. I doubt too many people, though well-inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, merely because they could not bear raillery. Some young persons have a natural excess of bashfulness; others are so tender of what they call honour, that they cannot endure to be made a jest of.—I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a Christian course, to shun the company of profane wits, as they would the plague; and never to contract an intimacy with any, but such as have a good sense of religion.”

But notwithstanding the warm opposition which his opponents made against him, Mr. Wesley's general good character for learning and diligence, gave such firmness and zeal to his friends, that on Thursday, March the 17th, 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College.\* His father very emphatically expresses his satisfaction on this occasion, in a letter of the 1st of April.—“I have both yours, since your election: in both, you express yourself as becometh you. What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God knows; *sed passi graviora*.—Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln.”—His mother, in a letter of March 30, tells him, in her usual strain of piety, “I think myself obliged to return great thanks to Almighty God, for giving you good success at Lincoln. Let whoever He pleased be the instrument, to Him, and to Him alone, the glory appertains.”

The Monday following his election, being March 21, he wrote to his brother Samuel,† expressing his gratitude for the assistance he had given him in that affair. With this

\* Private Diary.

† This letter, and the verses which accompanied it, were inserted some years ago, by Mr. Badcock, in the Westminster Magazine. The letter is there without a date, which I have taken from Mr. John Wesley's Diary. Mr. Badcock tells the public, that he had a variety of curious papers by him, which shew Mr. Wesley in a light which perhaps he had forgot, &c.—I shall have occasion to mention this circumstance in another place.

letter he sent two or three copies of verses, which seem, by what he says of them, to have been written at an early period. "I have not yet," says he, "been able to meet with one or two gentlemen, from whom I am in hopes of getting two or three copies of verses. The most tolerable of my own, if any such there were, you probably received from Leyburn. Some of those I had besides, I have sent here; and shall be very glad if they are capable of being so corrected, as to be of any service to you."—He sent three specimens of his poetry with this letter: The two following I shall insert; which, considered as hasty productions—as mere amusements—and sent in their rough state, I think every good judge will pronounce to be excellent.

#### HORACE, LIB. I. ODE XXII.

INTEGRITY needs no defence;  
 The man who trusts to innocence,  
 Nor wants the darts Numidians throw,  
 Nor arrows of the Parthian bow.  
 Secure o'er Lybia's sandy seas,  
 Or hoary Caucasus he strays,

\* Horace, with his usual vanity, lays claim to innocence. If, however, we understand it as spoken of that *evangelical* innocence which comes by faith, how admirably true is the declaration!

I cannot here refrain from presenting to the classical reader an anecdote communicated to me by the late Rev. B. Collins (afterwards Bury) of Bath. He was on a visit to the Rev. Mr. Pentecross of Wallingford; and when in company with that gentleman, and several ministers of the Gospel, he gave them an account of the famous Abbé (afterwards Cardinal) Maury's book on the Eloquence of the Pulpit; wherein the Abbé maintains, that the only way in which we can expect the Gospel to be received with respect by the world, is by cultivating the great talent of elocution. Mr. Pentecross remained silent during the discussion; but, on being asked his opinion, repeated from this Ode, in the original,

Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus  
 Non eget Mauri—

Perhaps there is not extant a better Latin pun. It also forcibly shewed his opinion, that the power and purity of the Gospel did not need such meretricious ornament. 1 Cor. i. 17; 18.

O'er regions scarcely known to fame,  
Wash'd by Hydaspes' fabled stream.

While void of cares, of nought afraid,  
Late in the Sabine woods I stray'd ;  
On Sylvia's lips, while pleas'd I sung,  
How love and soft persuasion hung !

A rav'nous wolf, intent on food,  
Rush'd from the covert of the wood ;  
Yet dar'd not violate the grove  
Secur'd by innocence and love:

Nor Mauritania's sultry plain  
So large a savage does contain ;  
Nor e'er so huge a monster treads  
Warlike Apulia's beechen shades.

Place me where no revolving sun  
Does e'er his radiant circle run ;  
Where clouds and damps alone appear,  
And poison the unwholesome year :

Place me in that effulgent day  
Beneath the sun's directer ray ;  
No change from its fix'd place shall move  
The basis of my lasting love.

TO A GENTLEMAN, ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER.

In Imitation of Horace, Lib. 1. Ode xxiv.

*Quis desiderio sit Pudor, &c.*

WHAT shame shall stop our flowing tears ?  
What end shall our just sorrows know ?  
Since fate, relentless to our prayers,  
Has giv'n the long destructive blow !

Ye Muses, strike the sounding string,  
In plaintive strains his loss deplore ;  
And teach an artless voice to sing  
The great, the bounteous, now no more !

For him the wise and good shall mourn,  
While late records his fame declare ;  
And, oft as rolling years return,  
Shall pay his tomb a grateful tear.

Ah ! what avails their plaints to thee ?

Ah ! what avails his fame declar'd ?

Thou blam'st, alas ! the just decree,  
Whence virtue meets its just reward.

Though sweeter sounds adorn'd thy tongue  
Than Thracian Orpheus *whilom* \* play'd ;  
When, list'ning to the morning song,  
Each tree bow'd down its leafy head,

Never ! ah, never from the gloom  
Of unrelenting Pluto's sway,  
Could the thin shade again resume  
Its ancient tenement of clay.

Indulgent patience, heav'n-born guest !  
Thy healing wings around display ;  
Thou gently calm'st the stormy breast,  
And driv'st the tyrant grief away.

Corroding care and eating pain,  
By just degrees thy influence own ;  
And lovely, lasting peace again  
Resumes her long-deserted throne.

His parents now invited him to spend some time with them in the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and staid the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote. During this time he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's-day, and in various ways assisted his father as occasion required. But he still pursued his studies, had frequent opportunities of conversing with his parents on subjects highly interesting and instructive, and kept a regular diary of what passed. He often takes notice of the particular subjects discussed in their various conversations, and mentions the practical observations his parents made, and sometimes adds his own. Among others, were the following: how to increase our faith, our hope, and our love of God: prudence, simplicity, sincerity, pride, vanity; wit, humour, fancy, courtesy,

\* I am sorry this poor quaint word should find its way into lines so serious and so beautiful. Mr. Wesley would not have *published* it with that blemish.



and general usefulness. His parents made such observations as reflection and long experience had suggested to them, and he carefully minuted down such rules and maxims as appeared to him important.

Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the University : He was acknowledged by all parties to be a man of talents, and an excellent critic in the learned languages. His compositions were distinguished by an elegant simplicity of style, and justness of thought, that strongly marked his classical taste. His skill in Logic, or the art of reasoning, was universally known and admired. The high opinion that was entertained of him, in these respects, was soon publicly expressed, by choosing him Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the Classes, on the 7th of November ; though he had only been elected Fellow of the College in March, was little more than twenty-three years of age, and had not yet proceeded Master of Arts.

It has already appeared, that Mr. Wesley's poetical talents were considerable : But they now assumed a more serious air. His paraphrase on the first eighteen verses of the 104th Psalm, is a more finished piece than any thing he had written before. He began to write it on the 19th of August this year, when at Epworth ; and it well deserves to be printed with accuracy. The original manuscript is now before me.

#### PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CIV.

Verse 1    UPBORNE aloft on vent'rous wing,  
               While, spurning earthly themes, I soar  
               Through paths untrod before,  
 What God, what Seraph shall I sing ?  
 Whom but THEE should I proclaim,  
 Author of this wond'rous frame ?  
               Eternal, uncreated Lord,  
 Enshrin'd in glory's radiant blaze !

At whose prolific voice, whose potent word,  
Commanded, NOTHING swift retir'd, and WORLDS began their race.

2       Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,  
Th' unbottom'd infinite abyss,  
Bad'st the deep her rage surcease,  
      And said'st, *Let there be light!*  
Ætherial light thy call obey'd,  
Glad she left her native shade,  
Through the wide void her living waters past;  
      Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,  
      Resign'd the reins, and trembling fled;  
The crystal waves roll'd on, and filled the ambient waste.

3       In light, effulgent robe, array'd,  
      Thou left'st the beauteous realms of day;  
The golden towers inclin'd their head,  
      As their Sov'reign took his way.  
3, 4     The all-incircling bounds, (a shining train,  
      Minist'ring flames around him flew.)  
Through the vast profound he drew,  
      When lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,  
Heaven, o'er th' uncolour'd void, her azure curtain threw.

      Lo! marching o'er the empty space,  
      The fluid stores in order rise,  
With adamant chains of liquid glass,  
      To bind the new-born fabric of the skies.  
3       Downward th' Almighty Builder rode;  
Old Chaos groan'd beneath the God:  
      Sable clouds his pompous car;  
      Harness'd winds before him ran,  
      Proud to wear their Maker's chain,  
And told, with hoarse-resounding voice, his coming from afar.

5       Embryon earth the signal knew,  
      And rear'd from night's dark womb her infant head,  
6       Though yet prevailing waves her hills o'erspread,  
      And stain'd their sickly face with pallid hue.  
7       But when loud thunders the pursuit began,  
      Back the affrighted spoilers ran:  
8       In vain aspiring hills oppos'd their race;  
      O'er hills and vales with equal haste,  
      The flying squadrons past,  
Till safe within the walls of their appointed place:

- 9        There, firmly fix'd, their sure enclosures stand,  
           Unconquerable bounds of ever-during sand !
- 10       HE spake ! From the tall mountain's wounded side,  
           Fresh springs roll'd down their silver tide :  
           O'er the glad vales the shining wanderers stray,  
           Soft murmuring as they flow,
- 11       While in their cooling wave inclining low,  
           The untaught natives of the field their parching thirst allay.
- 12       High-seated on the dancing sprays,  
           Checquering with varied light their parent streams,  
           The feather'd quires attune their artless lays,  
           Safe from the dreaded heat of solar beams.
- 13                Genial show'rs at HIS command,  
                   Pour plenty o'er the barren land :  
                   Labouring with parent throes,
- 14        See ! the teeming hills disclose  
           A new birth ; see the cheerful green,  
           Transitory, pleasing scene,  
           O'er the smiling landscape glow,  
           And gladden all the vale below.
- 15        Along the mountain's craggy brow,  
           Amiably dreadful now !  
           See the clasping vine dispread  
           Her gently-rising, verdant head !  
           See the purple grape appear,  
           Kind relief of human care !
- 16        Instinct with circling life, THY skill  
           Uprear'd the olive's loaded bough ;  
           What time, on Lebanon's proud hill,  
           Slow rose the stately cedar's brow.  
           Nor less rejoice the lowly plains,  
           Of useful corn the fertile bed,  
           Than when the lordly cedar reigns,  
           A beauteous, but a barren shade.
- 17        While in his arms the painted train,  
           Warbling to the vocal grove,  
           Sweetly tell their pleasing pain,  
           Willing slaves to genial love ;
- 18        While the wild-goats, an active throng,  
           From rock to rock light-bounding fly,  
           Jehovah's praise in solemn song  
           Shall echo through the vaulted sky.

Mr. Wesley was now more desirous than ever, of improving his time to the best advantage. As he had not yet taken his Degree of Master of Arts, the whole of his time was not at his own disposal ; but those portions of it which were, he carefully spent in pursuit of such knowledge as promised to be beneficial to himself, and would enable him to benefit others : He never indulged himself in an idle useless curiosity, which is the common fault of most young men in the conduct of their studies. He expresses his sentiments on this head, in a letter to his mother, of January, 1727. “ I am shortly to take my Master’s Degree. As I shall from that time be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing, I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary.—I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity indeed might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them, if we had half a dozen centuries of life to come ;\* but methinks it is great ill-husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us, in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return.

“ Two days ago I was reading a dispute between those celebrated masters of controversy, Bishop Atterbury and Bishop Hoadly ; but must own I was so injudicious as to break off in the middle. I could not conceive, that the dignity of the end was at all proportioned to the difficulty of attaining it. And I thought the labour of twenty or thirty hours, if I was sure of succeeding, which I was not, would be but ill rewarded by that important piece of knowledge, whether Bishop Hoadly had misunderstood Bishop Atterbury or no ?”

\* When Mr. Wesley was upwards of eighty, he said to me, after he had travelled from Portsmouth to Cobham, in Surrey, which he reached before 1 o’clock : —“ We should lose no time,—we have not, like the Patriarchs, 700 or 800 years to play with.”

The following paragraph, in the same letter, will shew the reader how diligent he had long been in improving the occasions which occurred, of impressing a sense of religion on the minds of his companions, and of his soft and obliging manner of doing it. "About a year and a half ago," says he, "I stole out of company at eight in the evening, with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a turn in an aisle of St. Mary's Church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him, if he really thought himself my friend? and if he did, why he would not do me all the good he could? He began to protest,—in which I cut him short, by desiring him to oblige me in an instance, which he could not deny to be in his own power: to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already. That he could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman.\*

"He turned exceedingly serious, and kept something of that disposition ever since. Yesterday was a fortnight, he died of a consumption. I saw him three days before he died; and, on the Sunday following, did him the last good office I could here, by preaching his funeral sermon; which was his desire when living."

Mr. Wesley proceeded Master of Arts on the 14th† of February,‡ and acquired considerable reputation in his disputation for his Degree; on which account his mother con-

\* It was however reserved for Peter Boehler to make *him* "a whole Christian," by preaching to him what St. Paul calls *the foolishness of God*.

† Private Diary.

‡ He informed me, that he delivered three Lectures on that occasion—one on Natural Philosophy, *De Anima Brutorum*,—another on Moral Philosophy, *De Julio Cesare*,—and a third on Religion, *De Amore Dei*. What a pity these should be lost! At least they are lost to me.

gratulates him in a letter of the fourteenth of March.—On the 19th he writes thus to her: “One advantage, at least, my Degree has given me; I am now at liberty, and shall be in a great measure for some time, to choose my own employment. And as I believe I know my own deficiencies best, and which of them are most necessary to be supplied; I hope my time will turn to somewhat better account, than when it was not so much in my own disposal.”—He had already fixed the plan of his studies; but how to obtain a more practical knowledge of God, and a more entire conformity to his will, in the temper of his mind and in all his actions, was a point not so easily determined. He thought, however, that the company to which he was necessarily exposed at Oxford, was a hindrance to his progress in religion, and that a greater seclusion from the world would be advantageous to him in this respect. He expresses the thoughts he then had of this matter, in the same letter of the 19th of March.—“The conversation of one or two persons, whom you may have heard me speak of, (I hope never without gratitude,) first took off my relish for most other pleasures, so far that I despised them in comparison of that. I have since proceeded a step further; to slight them absolutely. And I am so little at present in love with even company, the most elegant entertainment next to books; that, unless the persons have a religious turn of thought, I am much better pleased without them. I think it is the settled temper of my soul, that I should prefer, at least for some time, such a retirement, as would seclude me from all the world, to the station I am now in. Not that this is by any means unpleasant to me; but I imagine it would be more improving, to be in a place where I might confirm or implant in my mind what habits I would, without interruption, before the flexibility of youth be over.

“A school in Yorkshire was proposed to me lately, on  
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which I shall think more, when it appears whether I may have it or not. A good salary is annexed to it. But what has made me wish for it most, is the frightful description, as they call it, which some gentlemen who know the place, gave me of it yesterday. ‘It lies in a little vale, so pent up between ‘two hills, that it is scarcely accessible on any side; so that you ‘can expect little company from without, and within there is ‘none at all.’ I should therefore be entirely at liberty to converse with company of my own choosing, whom for that reason I would bring with me; and company equally agreeable, wherever I fixed, could not put me to less expence.

The sun that walks his airy way  
To cheer the world, and bring the day;  
The moon that shines with borrow'd light,  
The stars that gild the gloomy night;  
All of these, and all I see,  
Should be sung, and sung by me:  
These praise their Maker as they can,  
But want, and ask the tongue of man.

“I am full of business; but have found a way to write, without taking any time from that. It is but rising an hour sooner in the morning, and going into company an hour later in the evening; both which may be done without any inconvenience.”—The school however was disposed of in some other way; at which his mother was well pleased. “I am not sorry,” says she, “that you have missed the school; that way of life would not agree with your constitution; and, I hope, God has better work for you to do.”

Mr. Wesley saw, that a desultory method of study was not the way to accurate knowledge; and therefore he had, some time before he took his Master's Degree, laid down a plan which he now closely pursued; and he never suffered himself to deviate from the rule he had prescribed. Thus, his hours

of study, on Mondays and Tuesdays, were devoted to the Greek and Roman classics, historians and poets.—Wednesdays, to Logic and Ethics.—Thursdays, to Hebrew and Arabic.—Fridays, to Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy.—Saturdays, to Oratory and Poetry, chiefly composing.—Sundays, to Divinity —In the intermediate hours, between these more fixed studies, he perfected himself in the French language, which he had begun to learn two or three years before ; he also read a great variety of modern authors in almost every department of science. His method was this: He first read an author regularly through ; then, in the second reading, transcribed into his collections such passages as he thought important, either for the information they contained, or the beauty of expression. This method considerably increased his stock of knowledge, and gave him a familiar acquaintance with the authors he had read.

It has been doubted by some persons, whether the Mathematics entered into Mr. Wesley's plan of studies at the University. But among the authors mentioned in his diary, are found Euclid, Keil, S'Gravesande, Sir Isaac Newton, &c ; and he seems to have studied them with great attention.—He sometimes amused himself with experiments in Optics. He has, however, told all the world, that he found, by experience, *he* could not pursue these studies *to any perfection*, (though others might,) without injury to his soul : and he told me, that the chief good to be derived from mathematical studies, was their tendency to induce a habit of close thinking.

It has been before observed, that his father had two livings. He now became less able to attend to the duties of his station, than formerly ; especially as it was difficult, and sometimes dangerous in the winter, to pass between Epworth and Wroote : And it was not easy to procure an assistant to his mind, in that remote corner of the kingdom. He was therefore desirous, that his son, Mr. John Wesley, should come



into the country, and reside chiefly at Wroote, as his curate. Mr. Wesley complied with his father's request, who thus expresses himself in a letter of June:—"I do not think, that I have thanked you enough for your kind and dutiful letter of the 14th instant.—When you come hither, your headquarters will, I believe, for the most part be at Wroote, and mine at Epworth; though sometimes making a change."—Accordingly, he left Oxford on the 4th of August; and coming to London, spent some days with his brother Samuel, and then proceeded on his journey to take upon him his appointed charge.—In this part of Lincolnshire, the ague is endemic, and in October he was seized with it; at the same time he was called to Oxford, probably to oblige Dr. Morley, the Rector of Lincoln College, on some election business. This gentleman had rendered such services to Mr. Wesley, in his election to Lincoln, that he used to say, "I can refuse Dr. Morley nothing." In the present instance, his gratitude overcame all objections against travelling on horseback, through wet and cold, with an ague upon him. He reached Oxford on the 16th, and left it again on the 25th; travelling in the same manner back to Wroote, though often very ill on the road. He now continued in the country for some time, still pursuing the same plan of study, as far as the nature of his situation would permit.

The following letter, written by one of the Fellows of his own College, who, it seems, had been a good deal absent, and knew little of him, except what he had learned from the report of those who had been acquainted with him, will shew us his general character at Oxford.

*" Coll. Linc., December 28th, 1727.*

" SIR,

" YESTERDAY I had the satisfaction of receiving your kind and obliging letter, whereby you have given me a sin-

gular instance of that goodness and civility which is essential to your character; and strongly confirmed to me the many encomiums which are given you in this respect, by all who have the happiness to know you. This makes me infinitely desirous of your acquaintance. And when I consider those shining qualities which I hear daily mentioned in your praise, I cannot but lament the great misfortune we all suffer, in the absence of so agreeable a person from the College. But I please myself with the thoughts of seeing you here on Chapter-day, and of the happiness we shall have in your company in the summer. In the mean time, I return you my most sincere thanks for this favour; and assure you, that, if it should ever lie in my power to serve you, no one will be more ready to do it, than,

“ SIR,

“ Your most obliged and most humble Servant,

“ LEW FENTON ”

Mr. Wesley continued in the country till July 1728, when he returned by way of London, to Oxford, where he arrived on the 27th of this month, with a view to obtain Priest's Orders. No reason is assigned, why he was not ordained Priest sooner: It is evident, however, that he had never applied for it, probably on account of his age—On Sunday, the 22d of September, he was ordained Priest, by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, who had ordained him Deacon in 1725.

October 1, he set out for Lincolnshire, and did not again visit Oxford till the 16th of June, 1729. About the middle of the August following, he returned to his charge at Wroote, where he continued till he received the following letter from Dr. Morley, the Rector of his College, dated the 21st of October: “ At a meeting of the Society, just before I left College, to consider of the proper method to preserve discipline and good government; among several things agreed on, it was, in the opinion of all that were present, judged necessary

that the junior Fellows, who should be chosen Moderators, shall in person attend the duties of their office, if they do not prevail with some of the Fellows to officiate for them. We all thought it would be a great hardship on Mr. Fenton, to call him from a perpetual Curacy or Donative; yet this we must have done, had not Mr. Hutchins been so kind to him and us, as to free us from the uneasiness of doing a hard thing, by engaging to supply his place in the Hall for the present year. Mr. Robinson would as willingly supply yours, but the serving of two Cures about fourteen miles distant from Oxford, and ten at least as bad as the worst of your roads in the Isle, makes it, he says, impossible to discharge the duty constantly. We hope it may be as much for your advantage to reside at College as where you are, if you take pupils, or can get a Curacy in the neighbourhood of Oxon. Your father may certainly have another Curate, though not so much to his satisfaction: yet we are persuaded, that this will not move him to hinder your return to College, since the interest of College, and obligation to Statute require it."—In consequence of this letter, he quitted his father's Curacy at Wroote, and, on the 22d of November, came to reside at Oxford.

## CHAPTER II.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY,  
A. M., AND OF HIS BROTHER JOHN, IN CONTINUATION,  
UNTIL THEIR MISSION TO GEORGIA.

LEAVING Mr. John Wesley, now a resident at Oxford, I proceed to give an account of his brother in the flesh, and in the Lord.

Mr. CHARLES WESLEY was born December 18th, 1703, Old Style, several weeks before his time, at Epworth in Lincolnshire; being about five years younger than his brother John, and about sixteen younger than Samuel.

He appeared dead, rather than alive, when he was born. He did not cry, nor open his eyes, and was kept wrapt up in soft wool until the time when he should have been born according to the usual course of nature; and then he opened his eyes and cried.

He received the first rudiments of learning at home, under the pious care of his mother, as all the other children did. In 1716 he was sent to Westminster School, and placed under the care of his eldest brother Samuel Wesley, a High Churchman, who educated him in his own principles. He was exceedingly sprightly and active; very apt to learn, but arch and unlucky, though not ill-natured.

When he had been some years at school, Mr. R. Wesley, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, wrote to his father, and asked if he had any son named Charles; if so, he would make him his heir. Accordingly a gentleman in London brought money for his education several years. But one year another gentleman called, probably Mr. Wesley himself,

talked largely with him, and asked if he was willing to go with him to Ireland. Mr. Charles desired to write to his father, who answered immediately, and referred it to his own choice. He chose to stay in England. Mr. W then found and adopted another Charles Wesley, who was the late Earl of Mornington, ancestor of the present Marquis Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington. "A fair escape," says Mr. John Wesley, from whose short account of his brother I have taken this anecdote. Mr. John Wesley wrote this short account a few months before his death, intending to publish it. It remained among his MSS.

From this time, Mr. Charles Wesley depended chiefly upon his brother Samuel, till 1721, when he was admitted a scholar of St. Peter's College, Westminster.\* He was now a King's scholar; and as he advanced in age and learning, he acted dramas, and at length became Captain of the school. In 1726 he was elected to Christ-Church, Oxford,† at which time his brother was Fellow of Lincoln College. Mr. John Wesley gives the following account of him, after he came to Oxford: "He pursued his studies diligently, and led a regular harmless life; but if I spoke to him about religion, he would warmly answer, 'What, would you have me to be a saint all at once?', and would hear no more.‡ I was then near three years my father's Curate. During most of this time, he continued much the same; but in the year 1729, I observed, his letters grew much more serious, and when I returned to Oxford, in November that year, I found him in great earnestness to save his soul."

\* WELCH'S List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, as they were elected to Christ-Church College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 105.

† Ibid. p. 110.

‡ He was odd, eccentric, and what is called *absent*, in a high degree. Mr. John Wesley told me, that he always dreaded his visiting him, notwithstanding their great love to each other,—knowing well the derangement of books and papers that would probably ensue.

Mr. Charles Wesley gives the following account of himself for the first year or two after he went to Oxford.\* “My first year at College I lost in diversions; the next, I set myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking: I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young students to accompany me, and to observe the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University. This gained me the harmless name of Methodist. In half a year (after this) my brother left his Curacy at Epworth, and came to our assistance. We then proceeded regularly in our studies, and in doing what good we could to the bodies and souls of men.”

In the year 1728, in the twentieth year of his age, he began to apply more closely to study, to be more serious in his general deportment than usual, and to write a diary, in which he intended to register daily the state of his mind and the actions of the day. He knew that his brother, Mr. John Wesley, had kept such a diary for several years, and was able to give him instructions how to proceed. He therefore wrote to him in January 1729, as follows: “I would willingly write a diary of my actions, but what particulars am I to take notice of? Am I to give my thoughts and words, as well as deeds, a place in it? Am I to mark all the good and ill I do; and what besides? Must I not take account of my progress in learning, as well as religion? What cypher can I make use of? If you would direct me to the same, or like method to your own, I would gladly follow it; for I am fully convinced of the usefulness of such an undertaking. I shall be at a stand, till I hear from you.

“God has thought fit, it may be to increase my wariness, to deny me at present your company and assistance. It is through His strengthening me, I trust to maintain my ground till we meet. And I hope, that, neither before nor after that

\* In his letter to Dr. Chandler.

time, I shall relapse into my former state of insensibility. It is through your means, I firmly believe, that God will establish what he has begun in me; and there is no one person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody's prayers, (my mother's most likely,) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself, how or when I awoke out of my lethargy —only that it was not long after you went away."

The enemies of the Christian Revelation were become so bold, at this time, in their attempts to propagate their principles in the University, as to rouse the attention of the Vice-Chancellor; who, with the consent of the Heads of Houses and Proctors, issued the following *programma*, or edict, which was fixed up in most of the halls of the University :

" WHEREAS there is too much reason to believe, that some  
 " members of the University have of late been in danger of  
 " being corrupted by ill-designing persons, who have not  
 " only entertained wicked and blasphemous notions, contrary  
 " to the truth of the Christian religion; but have endeavoured  
 " to instil the same ill principles into others: and the  
 " more effectually to propagate their infidelity, have applied  
 " their poison to the unguarded inexperience of less-informed  
 " minds, where they thought it might operate with better  
 " success; carefully concealing their impious tenets from those  
 " whose riper judgment, and more wary conduct, might discover  
 " their false reasoning, and disappoint the intended  
 " progress of their infidelity. And whereas, therefore, it is  
 " more especially necessary at this time, to guard the youth  
 " of this place against these wicked advocates for pretended  
 " human reason against Divine revelation, and to enable them  
 " the better to defend their religion, and to expose the pride  
 " and impiety of those who endeavour to undermine it; Mr.  
 " Vice-Chancellor, with the consent of the Heads of Houses  
 " and Proctors, has thought fit to recommend it, as a matter

“ of the utmost consequence, to the several tutors of each  
 “ College and Hall in the University, that they discharge  
 “ their duty by a double diligence, in informing their respective  
 “ pupils in their Christian duty, as also in explaining to them the  
 “ articles of religion which they profess, and are often called  
 “ upon to subscribe, and in recommending to them the fre-  
 “ quent and careful reading of the Scriptures, and such other  
 “ books as may serve more effectually to promote Christianity,  
 “ sound principles, and orthodox faith. And, further, Mr.  
 “ Vice-Chancellor, with the same consent, does hereby forbid  
 “ the said youth the reading of such books as may tend to the  
 “ weakening of their faith, the subverting of the authority of  
 “ the Scripture, and the introducing of Deism, profaneness,  
 “ and irreligion in their stead.”—The Dean of Christ-Church  
 was so much a friend to infidelity, that he would not suffer  
 this *programma* to be put up in the Hall of his College.  
 But the Lord was about to take the matter into his own  
 hand. At the very time when the friends of infidelity were  
 making so strong an effort to propagate their principles in  
 this celebrated seminary of learning, God was preparing some  
 young men to plant a religious society in the same place,  
 which should spread its branches throughout the world !

In the course of the following summer, Mr. Charles Wesley  
 became more and more serious, and his zeal for God began to  
 manifest itself in exertions to do good beyond the common  
 round of religious duties. He endeavoured to awaken an  
 attention to religion in the minds of some of the students, and  
 was soon successful in one or two instances. This appears  
 from the following letter, which he wrote to his brother John  
 in May 1729 :

“ Providence has at present put it into my power to do  
 some good. I have a modest, humble, well-disposed youth  
 lives next me ; and have been, thank God, somewhat instru-  
 mental in keeping him so. He had got into vile hands, and



is now broke loose. He durst not receive the sacrament, but at the usual times, for fear of being laughed at. By convincing him of the duty of frequent communicating, I have prevailed on both of us to receive once a week.

“ I earnestly long for, and desire the blessing, God is about to send me in you. I am sensible *this* is my day of grace; and that, upon my employing the time before our meeting and next parting, will in great measure depend my condition for eternity.”

In November, 1729, Mr. John Wesley left his Curacy, and came to reside wholly at Oxford. The beginning of the society then formed was small, and it appeared contemptible to those around; but events have shewn, that it was big with consequences of the utmost importance to the happiness of millions. So little do men know before-hand of the designs of Providence!

About this time Mr. Charles Wesley began to take pupils. On this occasion his father wrote to him as follows, in a letter dated January 1730, when Charles had just passed the 21st year of his age: “ I had your last, and you may easily guess whether I were not well pleased with it, both on your account and my own. You have a double advantage by your pupils, which will soon bring you more, if you will improve it, as I firmly hope you will, by taking the utmost care to form their minds to piety as well as learning. As for yourself, between logic, grammar, and mathematics, be idle if you can. I give my blessing to the Bishop for having tied you a little faster, by obliging you to rub up your Arabic: and a fixed and constant method will make the whole both pleasing and delightful to you. But, for all that, you must find time every day for walking, which you know you may do with advantage to your pupils; and a little more robust exercise, now and then, will do you no harm. You are now launched fairly, Charles; hold up your head, and swim like a man; and

when you cuff the wave beneath you, say to it, much as another hero did,

CAROLUM *rehis*, et CAROLI *fortunam*.\*

But always keep your eye fixed above the pole-star: And so God send you a good voyage through the troublesome sea of life!, which is the hearty prayer of your loving father."

Mr. Charles Wesley and his brother John had been always united in affection; they were now united in their pursuit of learning, their views of religion, and their endeavours to do good. A Mr. Morgan, then a student also, was to them as another brother; and, united together, they were as a three-fold cord, which is not easily broken. Charles had much more fire, and openness of temper than his brother; but he was not less cautious in this respect. If any doubts arose in his mind; or if any practice, which he thought proper and commendable, seemed likely to give great offence to others, he asked the advice of those who were older and wiser than himself, how he ought to proceed. In a letter which he wrote to his father in June 1731, he says, "on Whitsunday the whole College received the sacrament, except the *servitors*, (for we are too well-bred to communicate with *them*, though in the body and blood of Christ,) to whom it was administered the next day; on which I was present at church, but with the Canons left the sacrament to those for whom alone it was prepared. What I would beg to be resolved in, is, whether or no my being assured I should give infinite scandal by staying, could sufficiently justify me in turning my back on God's ordinance? It is a question my future conduct is much concerned in, and I shall therefore earnestly wait for your decision." We see here what a view he had of the sin of turning away from the ordinance of God!

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded Master of Arts in the usual course, and thought only of spending all his days at Oxford

\* "Thou carriest *Charles*, and *Charles's* fortune."—Spoken originally of *Cæsar*.

as a tutor ; for he “ exceedingly dreaded entering into Holy Orders.”\* But, in 1735, a new scene opened before him and his pious brother, which had not been contemplated by either of them, but was manifestly marked out by the providence of Him “ *who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*”

We have seen Mr. John Wesley rising into notice and esteem on account of his literary talents, yet still in the humble situation of curate to his father, which he now quitted at the call of the chief men of his college. In consequence of that order, he entered upon a new situation : He obtained pupils, and became a tutor. He presided also in the Hall as Moderator in the disputations, which were held six times a week ; and always regarded this last appointment, as a very gracious providence : It gave him a complete knowledge of that important branch of learning, by which he was afterwards enabled, during his whole life, to defend the truth against all opponents. “ For several years,” says he himself, “ I was Moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at Lincoln College in Oxford. I could not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing : and especially in discerning and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in, by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces ; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment.”†

He was now fully employed between his public offices, and his pupils. Of the latter he took the greatest care, accounting himself not only responsible for them to their parents and the community, but to God. He laboured not only to make

\* His letter to Dr. Chandler.

† His masterly refutation of the Pelagian system of Dr. Taylor is an admirable proof of this.—See his Works, vol. 17. p. 79.

them scholars, but Christians also, and to that end wrote a form of prayers for them (which is still extant) for every day in the week.

His own address to the Tutors of the University, will clearly evince the spirit in which he acted.

“Ye venerable men,” says he, “who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth, to dispel thence the shades of ignorance and error, and train them up to be wise unto salvation: Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? With all those fruits of the Spirit, which your important office so indispensably requires? Is your heart whole with God? Full of love and zeal to set up his kingdom on earth? Do you continually remind those under your care, that the one rational end of all our studies, is to know, love, and serve the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? Do you inculcate upon them, day by day, that love alone never faileth? (Whereas, *‘whether there be tongues, they shall fail,’*—or philosophical *‘knowledge, it shall vanish away.’*) And that without love, all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, vexation of spirit? Has all you teach an actual tendency to the love of God, and all mankind for his sake? Have you an eye to this end in whatsoever you prescribe, touching the kind, the manner, and the measure of their studies: desiring and labouring, that wherever the lot of these young soldiers of Christ is cast, they may be so many burning and shining lights, adorning the gospel of Christ in all things? And permit me to ask, do you put forth all your strength in the vast work you have undertaken? Do you labour herein with all your might? Exerting every faculty of your soul? Using every talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermost of your power? Let it not be said, that I speak here, as if all under your care were intended to be clergymen. Not so: I only speak as if they were all intended to be Christians.”\*

\* His Works, vol. 1. p. 36.

Mr. Wesley's labours as a tutor, were not in vain. The late Rev. Mr. Hervey, author of the "Meditations," &c., was one of his pupils, and thus speaks of him with reference to the advantages he had received under his tuition at Oxford, in a letter dated, Oxon. Sept. 2, 1736.

"As for me, I am still a most weak, corrupt creature. But, blessed be the unmerited mercy of God, and thanks be to your never-to-be-forgotten example, 'That I am what I am.'"

And again,

"Do you, dear Sir, put up your prayers, and Oh ! let the mighty God set to his seal, that it may be unto me according to my heart's desire. Then will I invite you, (*my father*, shall I call you, or *my friend*? For indeed you have been *both* unto me,) to meet me among the spirits of just men made perfect: since I am not like to see your face in the flesh any more for ever !† Then will I bid you welcome, yea, I will tell of your love, before the universal assembly, at the tremendous tribunal."

In the postscript he adds,

"I heartily thank you, as for all other favours, so especially for teaching me Hebrew. I have cultivated, (according to your advice,) this study, and am (blessed be God, the giver of knowledge,) somewhat improved in this language."

In another letter, dated Weston, near Northampton, Dec. 30, 1747, he observes, "Assure yourself, dear Sir, that I can never forget that tender-hearted and generous fellow of Lincoln, who condescended to take such compassionate notice of a poor under-graduate: whom almost every body condemned; and no man cared for his soul."

Mr. Wesley's own account of his religious views and impressions while at Oxford, is so worthy of observation, that I give it without any alteration.

† Mr. Wesley was at this time in Georgia.

“ In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor’s ‘ Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.’ In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected with that part in particular which relates to *purity of intention*. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God : all my thoughts, and words, and actions : being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium : but that every part of my life, (not some only,) must either be a sacrifice to God, or to myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

“ In the year 1726, I met with Kempis’s ‘ Christian Pattern.’ The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God, (supposing it possible to do this and go no farther,) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to him. I saw that ‘ simplicity of intention and purity of affection,’ one design in all we speak or do, and one desire, ruling all our tempers, are indeed ‘ the wings of the soul,’ without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

“ A year or two after, Mr. Law’s ‘ Christian Perfection,’ and ‘ Serious Call,’ were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian. And I determined, through his grace, (of the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible,) to be all-devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

“ In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having the mind which was in Christ, and of walking as Christ also walked : even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him, and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in

most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as an uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of any thing more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men : of allowing myself in any the least conformity to our grand Exemplar.”\*

About this time a serious man, whom he had travelled many miles to see, said to him, “ Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember that you cannot serve him alone. You must therefore find companions, or make them ; the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.” He never forgot this. Therefore, on his return to the University, he first spoke to his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, and afterwards to Mr. Morgan, Mr. Hervey, Mr. Whitefield, and others. When they first began to meet, they read Divinity on the Sunday evenings, and on other nights the Greek and Latin Classics. The summer following, they began to visit the prisoners in the castle, and the sick poor in the town.

Their meetings now began to be more directly religious : They read and considered the Greek Testament on the week evenings, and conversed closely and deeply on the things of God. They now likewise observed the Fasts of the ancient Church every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated once a week. “ We were now,” says Mr. Wesley, “ about fifteen in number, ‘ *all of one heart and of one mind.*’ ”

The spirit of this little association cannot be exemplified more fully, than by giving at large the scheme of self-examination which was agreed upon and used by them.

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LOVE OF GOD AND SIMPLICITY : MEANS OF WHICH ARE  
PRAYER AND MEDITATION.

1. Have I been simple and recollected in every thing I said or did? Have I (1.) been *simple* in every thing, i. e. looked

\* His Works, vol. 24. p. 4. &c.

upon God, as my Good, my Pattern, my One Desire, my Disposer, Parent of Good; acted wholly for him; bounded my views with the present action or hour? (2.) *Recollected?* i. e. Has this simple view been distinct and uninterrupted? Have I done any thing without a previous perception of its being the will of God? Or without a perception of its being an exercise or a means of the virtue of the day? Have I said any thing without it?

2. Have I prayed with fervour? At going in and out of church? In the church? Morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with my friends? At rising? Before lying down? On Saturday noon? All the time I was engaged in exterior work? In private? Before I went into the place of public or private prayer, for help therein? Have I, wherever I was, gone to church, morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? And spent from one hour to three in private? Have I in private prayer frequently stopt short, and observed what fervour? Have I repeated it over and over, till I adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or paragraph owned, I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in his name, and adverted to my Saviour now interceding for me at the right hand of God, and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I daily used ejaculations? i. e. Have I every hour prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? Considered, with whom I was the last hour, what I did, and how? With regard to recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation and thankfulness? Considered the next hour in the same respects, offered all I do to my Redeemer, begged his assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to his keeping? Have I done this deliberately, (not in haste,) seriously, (not doing any thing else the while,) and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day? i. e.



Have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? Deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a collect at nine, twelve, and three? And grace before and after eating? (aloud at my own room,) deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? Every day, unless for necessary mercy? (1.) From six, &c. to prayers? (2.) From four to five, (What was particular in the providence of this day?) How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.) (3.) On Sunday, from six to seven, with Kempis? From three to four, on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one, on the Passion? After ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

#### LOVE OF MAN.

1st. Have I been zealous to do, and active in doing good? i. e. (1.) Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing, or lessening evil?

(2.) Have I pursued it with my might?

(3.) Have I thought any thing too dear to part with, to serve my neighbour?

(4.) Have I spent an hour at least, every day, in speaking to some one or other?

(5.) Have I given any one up, till he expressly renounced me?

(6.) Have I, before I spoke to any, learned, as far as I could, his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hindrances, internal and external? Fixed the point to be aimed at? Then the means to it?

(7.) Have I, in speaking, proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them, then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help?

(8.) Have I, in speaking to a stranger, explained what reli-

gion is not, (not negative, not external,) and what it is, (a recovery of the image of God,) searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? Exhorted and directed him?

(9.) Have I persuaded all I could, to attend public prayers, sermons and sacraments? And, in general, to obey the laws of the Church Universal, the Church of England, the State, the University, and their respective colleges?

(10.) Have I, when taxed with any act of obedience, avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness?

(11.) Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practised just then?

(12.) Have I, in disputing, (1.) desired my opponent, to define the terms of the question: to limit it: what he grants, what denies: (2.) Delayed speaking my opinion; let him explain and prove his: then insinuated and pressed objections?

(13.) Have I, after every visit, asked him who went with me, Did I say any thing wrong?

(14.) Have I, when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2dly. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbour in virtue or pleasure? Grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3dly. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4thly. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of any one, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner, consistent with that end? Have I any way appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5thly. Has good-will been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions toward others?

6thly. Have I duly used intercession? (1.) Before, (2.) after speaking to any? (3.) For my friends on Sunday? (4.) For my pupils on Monday? (5.) For those who have particularly

desired it, on Wednesday and Friday? (6.) For the family in which I am, every day?"

We may here see the great sincerity and earnestness of Mr. Wesley and his friends. But the darkness of their minds, as to Gospel-truths, is very evident to those who are favoured with clear and evangelical views.

He was now a mere *worker for life*, (though evidently expecting the assistance of the Holy Spirit,) and consequently his mind was kept in a state of perplexity, not rightly understanding the doctrine of justification; which he either confounded with sanctification, or thought a man must be sanctified before he can be justified. This notion hindered him from perceiving, that to justify, in the language of St. Paul, is to pardon a repenting and believing sinner, as an act of grace; not for the sake of any previous holiness in him, but through Jesus Christ alone. This plan, which the Gospel proposes as the only way of reconciling sinners to God—of making them holy in heart and life, and of giving them a sure hope, full of immortality,—he had yet to learn. And it was a painful lesson, as unveiling his true condition in the sight of God.

It appears from the account I have given of Mr. Charles Wesley, that for more than two years before this time he had studied very hard, and, through his brother's advice and influence, was become, by the blessing of God, deeply serious; that during the last summer he had received the sacrament weekly, and had prevailed on two or three young men to do the same; and that these gentlemen had occasionally met together, for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other in their duty, and of regulating their employments by certain rules. Mr. John Wesley was now with them, "and the exact regularity of their lives as well as studies," says he, "occasioned a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, 'Here is a new set of *Methodists* sprung up;' alluding to some ancient Physicians who were so called. The name was new

and quaint ; so it took immediately, and the Methodists were known all over the University." His own account is as follows :—

“ In November 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College ; Mr. Charles Wesley, Student of Christ Church ; Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ Church ; and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton College ; began to spend some evenings in a week together, in reading chiefly the Greek Testament. The next year, two or three of Mr. John Wesley’s pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them : and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley’s pupils. It was in 1732, that Mr. Ingham of Queen’s College, and Mr. Broughton of Exeter, were added to their number. To these in April, was joined Mr. Clayton of Brazen-Nose, with two or three of his pupils. About the same time, Mr. James Hervey was permitted to meet with them, and afterwards Mr. Whitefield.”\*

These young gentlemen continued their meetings for some time, without any other views than their own benefit. But, in the summer of 1730, Mr. Morgan called at the gaol, to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife ; and told them, that, from the conversation he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. Having mentioned this several times, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles went with him on the 24th of August to the Castle, and were so well satisfied with their visit, that they determined to go thither once or twice a week. They had not done this long, before Mr. Morgan, who seems to have led the way in acts of charity and benevolence to others, desired Mr. Wesley to go with him to see a poor woman in the town who was sick. When they began to reflect on the benefit which this might confer on the poor, they thought it would be well worth while to spend

\* Wesley’s Works, vol. xv. p. 375.

two or three hours in the week in this species of charity, especially if the Minister of the parish, in which such person was, did not object to it. But as this practice was quite new, and had an appearance of irregularity, on which account it might give offence, Mr. Wesley did not choose to proceed any further without advice. He wrote to his father, who was remarkably attached to regularity and church-order, stating what they had hitherto done, and what their design was; begging to have his opinion, whether they had already gone too far? Whether they should stand still where they were, or go forward?

His father's answer is dated September 21, in which he says, "As to your own designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *Valde probo*?\*" and that I have the highest reason to bless God, that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one enemy more to combat with,—the flesh; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who I see, in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you.

"I am afraid lest the main objection you make against your going on in the business of the prisoners, may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For '*who can harm you if you are followers of that which is so good?*' And which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of Israel will know his sheep at the last day. Though, if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a confessor's reward. You own that none but such as are out of their

\* I highly approve.

senses would be prejudiced against you for acting in this manner.—Go on then, in God's name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you? For when I was an under-graduate, I visited those in the Castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully; and my heart and prayers are with you.

“Your first regular step is to consult with him, if any such there be, who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners; and the next is, to obtain the direction and approbation of your Bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you.—Accordingly, to Him who is every where, I now heartily commit you.”

This advice confirmed them in their benevolent purposes, and animated them with zeal in the execution. They carefully attended, however, to their Father's prudential directions; and Mr. Wesley immediately consulted Mr. Gerard, the Bishop of Oxford's Chaplain, who likewise attended the prisoners, when any were condemned to die. Mr. Gerard commended the design, and said he would answer for the Bishop's approbation, to whom he would take the first opportunity of mentioning it. The Bishop being consulted, not only gave his permission, but was highly pleased with the undertaking.

The opposition however increased. The men of wit in Christ Church entered the lists against them, and, between mirth and anger, made a great number of reflections upon the *Sacramentarians*, as they were pleased to call them. Their allies of Merton thought both this title and that of *Methodists*, too decent, as implying something commendable; they therefore changed it, and honoured them with the title of the *Holy Club*. But most of these being persons of well-known characters, they made no proselytes from the Sacrament, till a gentleman, eminent for learning and well esteemed for piety, joining them, told his nephew, that if he dared to go to the

weekly communion any longer, he would turn him out of doors. This argument had no success; the young gentleman communicated next week. The uncle now became more violent, and shook his nephew by the throat, to convince him more effectually, that receiving the sacrament every week was founded in error: But this argument appearing to the young gentleman to have no weight in it, he continued his usual practice. The uncle now changed the mode of attack, and, like a true agent of Satan, by a soft obliging manner melted down the young gentleman's resolution of being so strictly religious; and from this time he began to absent himself, five Sundays out of six, from the sacrament. This success gave the opposition new strength; and one of the Seniors of the College consulting with the Doctor, they prevailed with two other young gentlemen to promise that they would only communicate three times a year.

The opposition now becoming more serious, by some persons of influence taking so decided a part against them, the two Mr. Wesleys wrote to their father again, stating their situation, and asking further advice. His answer, which is dated December 1, now lies before me.

“ This day I received both yours; and this evening, in the course of our reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though, since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the original. Πολλή μοι Καυχῆσις ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. Πεπληρωμαι τῇ παρακλήσει. Ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ.\* What would you be? Would you be angels? I question whether a mortal can arrive to a greater degree of perfection, than steadily to do good; and, for that very reason, patiently and meekly to suffer evil. For my part, on the present view of your actions and designs, my daily prayers are, that God would keep you hum-

\* 2 Cor. vii. 4. Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful.

ble: and then I am sure that if you continue to ‘*suffer for righteousness’ sake*,’ though it be but in a lower degree, the Spirit of God and of glory shall in some good measure rest upon you. And you cannot but feel such a satisfaction in your own minds, as you would not part with for all the world. Be never weary of well-doing: never look back, for you know the prize and the crown are before you: though I can scarce think so meanly of you, as that you should be discouraged with the ‘*crackling of thorns under a pot*.’ Be not high-minded, but fear. Preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with, from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value you, if they see your works are all of a piece; or, which is infinitely more, He, by whom actions and intentions are weighed, will both accept, esteem, and reward you.

“ I hear my son John has the honour of being styled the ‘Father of the Holy Club:’ if it be so, I am sure I must be the Grand-father of it; and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of HIS HOLINESS.”

In the same letter he advises them to use great mildness towards their persecutors, but at the same time to avoid a mean or sneaking behaviour, and rather to shew an open manly firmness, which is highly becoming in a mind conscious of acting well.

In answer to this, Mr. John Wesley wrote to his father, December 11. He says, “ We all return you our sincere thanks for your timely and necessary advice; and should be exceedingly glad if it were as easy to follow it, as it is impossible not to approve it. That, doubtless, is the very point we have to gain, before any other can be managed successfully, to have an habitual lively sense of our being only instruments



in His hand, who can do all things either with or without any instrument.\* But how to fix this sense in us, is the great question.—We hope you and all our friends will continue to intercede for us, to Him with whom all things are possible.—To-morrow night I expect to be in company with the gentleman who did us the honour to take the first notice of our little society. I have terrible reasons to think he is as slenderly provided with humanity, as with sense and learning. However, I must not let slip this opportunity, because he is at present in some distress, occasioned by his being obliged to dispute in the Schools on Monday, though he is not furnished with such arguments as he wants. I intend, if he has not procured them before, to help him to some arguments, that I may at least remove that prejudice from him,—that ‘we are friends to none but those who are as queer as ourselves.’”

Under the encouragement of his father’s letter, they continued to meet together as usual, and to confirm one another in their pious resolutions. They still communicated once a week, and visited the prisoners, and some poor families in the town when they were sick; and, that they might have wherewith to relieve their distress, they abridged themselves of all the superfluities, and of many of the conveniences, of life. They took every opportunity of conversing with their acquaintance in the most useful manner to awaken them to a sense of religion; but, the outcry daily increasing, they proposed, both to their friends and opponents, the following questions :

I. Whether it does not concern all men of all conditions, to imitate Him, as much as they can, “who went about doing good?”

Whether all Christians are not concerned in that command, “While we have time, let us do good to all men?”

\* He maintained this “habitual sense” to the last moment of his life.

Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now ?

Whether we can be happy at all hereafter, unless we have, according to our power, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited those that are sick and in prison, and made all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death ?

Whether it be not our bounden duty always to remember, that He did more for us, than we can do for Him, who assures us, “ *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me ?*”

II. Whether, upon these considerations, we may not try to do good to our acquaintance ? Particularly, whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of being Christians ?

Whether of the consequent necessity of being scholars ?

Whether of the necessity of method and industry in order to either learning or virtue ?

Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can ?

Whether we may not mention to them the Authors whom we conceive to have wrote best on those subjects ?

Whether we may not assist them as we are able, from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those Authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance ?

III. Whether, upon the considerations above-mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are hungry, naked, or sick ? In particular, whether if we know any necessitous family, we may not give them a little food, clothes, or physic, as they want ?

Whether we may not give them, if they can read, a Bible, Common-prayer Book, or Whole Duty of Man ?

Whether we may not, now and then, inquire how they

have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

Whether we may not enforce upon them, more especially, the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the Church and Sacrament?

Whether we may not contribute what little we are able, toward having their children clothed and taught to read?

Whether we may not take care that they be taught their Catechism, and short prayers for morning and evening?

IV. *Lastly.* Whether, upon the considerations above-mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are in prison? In particular, whether we may not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small sums?

Whether we may not lend smaller sums to those that are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with?

Whether we may not give to them, who appear to want it most, a little money, or clothes, or physic?

Whether we may not supply as many as are serious enough to read, with a Bible and Whole Duty of Man.

Whether we may not, as we have opportunity, explain and enforce these upon them, especially with respect to public and private prayer and the blessed Sacrament?

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It was impossible for any person, who had any religion or humanity left, to answer these questions in the negative, however averse he might be to practise the duties proposed in them. No one attempted it; but several, when they understood their plan and designs, increased their little stock of money for the prisoners and the poor, by subscribing something quarterly to it; so that the more persons they consulted, the more they were themselves confirmed in the belief that they were acting right, and more determined to pursue their plan, notwithstanding the ridicule which increased fast upon them during the winter.

It appears from the questions here proposed, which relate to the students, that Mr. Wesley was not inattentive to their progress in learning, while he endeavoured to make them religious. His regular method of study, his diligence, and great care to make his pupils thoroughly understand every thing they read, were admirably adapted to make them scholars also.

This year, 1731, the two brothers began the practice of conversing together in Latin, whenever they were alone, chiefly with a view of acquiring a facility in expressing themselves in this language, on all occasions, with perspicuity, energy, and elegance. This practice they continued for nearly sixty years; and with such success, that, if their style did not equal, it certainly, on some subjects, approached nearer to, the best models of conversation in the Augustan age, than many of the learned have thought it possible to attain.

In the beginning of the year 1731, a meeting was held by several of the Seniors of the College, to consult on the speediest way to stop the progress of *enthusiasm* in it. Mr. Wesley and his friends did not learn what was the result of this very pious consultation; but it was soon publicly reported, that Dr. — and the Censors were going to blow up the *Godly Club*. This was now their common title; though they were sometimes dignified with that of the *Enthusiasts*, or the *Reforming Club*. As new difficulties arose, Mr. Wesley lost no opportunity of consulting his friends. He now wrote to his brother Samuel, at Westminster; whose answer is dated April—"I designed," says he, "to have written by Mr. Bateman, to whom I read part of your last letter, concerning the execrable consultation, in order to stop the progress of religion, by giving it a false name. He lifted up his eyes and hands, and protested he could not have believed such a thing. He gave Mr. Morgan a very good character; and said, he should always think himself obliged to him, for the pains he took in reclaiming a young pupil of his, who was just got

into ill company, and upon the brink of destruction.—I do not like your being called *a club*; that name is really calculated to do mischief. But the other charge of *enthusiasm* can weigh with none, but such as drink away their senses, or never had any: For surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it. I called on Dr. Terry, to desire him to subscribe to *Job*, but did not meet with him at home. In two or three days, *O rem ridiculam et jocosam!* he did me the favour to call upon me. I said, ‘I hope my two brothers have still good characters at Oxford.’ He answered, he believed they were studious and sober. When he was got down stairs, he turned about, and said, ‘I think I have heard your brothers are exemplary, and take great pains to instil good principles into young people.’ I told him, and you may guess I told him the truth, ‘I was very glad to hear such a character of them, *especially from him.*’”—From the last words, it is pretty plain, that Dr. Terry was an avowed opposer of Mr. Wesley and his friends, though he was constrained to bear testimony to the goodness of their characters: But whether he was the grave gentleman, who so piously took his nephew by the throat, to convert him to his own way of thinking and acting, and who consulted with the censors how to stop the progress of religion among them, is not certain.

In the midst of such opposition, Mr. Wesley thought it prudent to take every method in his power to prevent the good that was in them from being evil spoken of; and with this view, and to obtain further advice, he wrote in May to the Rev. Mr. Hoole,\* an aged clergyman in his father’s neighbourhood, of known wisdom and integrity. Part of his answer runs thus:† “As to my own sense of the matter, I confess I cannot but heartily approve of that serious and

\* Private Diary.

† Wesley’s Works, vol. xxvi, p. 99.

religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices ; and can have no notion of that man's religion, or concern for the honour of the University, that opposes you, as far as your design respects the Colleges. I should be loth to send a son of mine to any seminary, where his conversation with virtuous young men, whose professed design of meeting together at proper times was to assist each other in forming good resolutions, and encouraging one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members."

On the 13th of April, Mr. Wesley, in company with his brother, set out on foot for Epworth ; for they now saved every penny they could, to give it to the poor. They returned to Oxford on the 12th of May ; and, on the 11th of June, he wrote to his father, giving him a very discouraging account of their little society. With respect to their walk, he observes, that it was not so pleasant to Oxford as from it, though in one respect more useful : " For it let us see," says he, " that four or five and twenty miles is an easy and safe day's journey in hot weather as well as cold. We have made another discovery too, which may be of some service ; that it is easy to read as we walk ten or twelve miles ; and that it neither makes us faint, nor gives us any other symptom of weariness, more than the mere walking without reading at all.

" Since our return, our little company that used to meet us on a Sunday evening, is shrunk into almost none at all. Mr. Morgan is sick at Holt ; Mr. Boyce is at his father's house at Barton ; Mr. Kirkham must very shortly leave Oxford, to be his uncle's curate ; and a young gentleman of Christ Church, who used to make a fourth, either afraid or ashamed or both, is returned to the ways of the world, and studiously shuns our company. However, the poor at the Castle have still the Gospel preached to them, and some of their temporal wants supplied, our little fund rather increasing

than diminishing. Nor have we yet been forced to discharge any of the children which Mr. Morgan left to our care: Though I wish they too do not find the want of him; I am sure some of their parents will.

“Some, however, give us a better prospect; John White-lamb in particular.\* I believe, with this, you will receive some account from himself how his time is employed. He reads one English, one Latin, and one Greek book alternately; and never meddles with a new one in any of the languages till he has ended the old one. If he goes on as he has begun, I dare take upon me to say, that, by the time he has been here four or five years, there will not be such an one, of his standing, in Lincoln College, perhaps not in the University of Oxford.”

But notwithstanding their little company was thus scattered, they still pursued their designs of doing as much good as possible, with the same diligence and zeal as before. Some of their friends, however, began to think that they carried matters too far, and laid unnecessary burdens on themselves. This subject Mr. Wesley mentions in a letter to his mother, of the same date with that to his father mentioned above, giving her at the same time some account of the effects of their journey.

“The motion and sun together,” says he, “in our last hundred and fifty miles’ walk, so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humours, that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season. And Mr. Kirkham assures us, on the word of a priest and a physician, that if we will but take the same medicine once or twice a year, we shall never need any other to keep us from the gout. When we were with him, we touched two or three times upon a nice subject, but did not come to any full conclusion. The point debated was, what is the meaning of being *righteous over much*, or by the more common phrase of, being too strict in religion? and what danger there was of any of us falling into that extreme?

\* He afterwards married one of Mr. Wesley’s sisters.

“ All the ways of being too righteous or too strict which we could think of, were these: Either the carrying some one particular virtue to so great a height, as to make it clash with some others; or, the laying too much stress on the instituted means of grace, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; or, the multiplying prudential means upon ourselves so far, and binding ourselves to the observance of them so strictly, as to obstruct the end we aimed at by them, either by hindering our advance in heavenly affections in general, or by retarding our progress in some particular virtue. Our opponents seemed to think my brother and I [were] in some danger of being too strict in this last sense; of laying burdens on ourselves too heavy to be borne, and consequently too heavy to be of any use to us.

“ It is easy to observe, that almost every one thinks that rule totally needless, which he does not need himself; and as to the christian spirit itself, almost every one calls that degree of it which he does not himself aim at, enthusiasm. If therefore we plead for either, (not as if we thought the former absolutely needful, neither as if we had attained the latter.) it is no great wonder that they who are not for us in practice should be against us. If you, who are a less prejudiced judge, have perceived us faulty in this matter, too superstitious or enthusiastic, or whatever it is to be called; we earnestly desire to be speedily informed of our error, that we may no longer spend our strength on that which profiteth not. Or whatever there may be on the other hand, in which you have observed us to be too remiss, that likewise we desire to know as soon as possible. This is a subject which we would understand with as much accuracy as possible; it being hard to say which is of the worse consequence,—the being too strict, the really carrying things too far, the wearing ourselves and spending our strength in burdens that are unnecessary,—or the being frightened by those terrible words, from what, if not directly necessary, would at least be useful.”



This letter was followed by another, written in November to his brother Samuel, on the same subject, and discovers his sentiments more at large. It seems Mr. Samuel Wesley had suggested to him, that in his general seriousness, and in one or two other points of behaviour, he carried matters too far. In answer to these remarks of his brother, he says, "Considering the other changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder if the time comes, when we differ as little in our conclusions as we do now in our premises. In most, we seem to agree already ; especially as to rising early, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire, which I always do, if any one in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the very things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, rising early, which implies going to bed early, (though I never am sleepy now,) and keeping so little company, not one man in ten of those who are offended at me, as it is, would ever open their mouth against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned ; the root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half my time, as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think, '*Nil tanti est.*'\* As to my hair, I am much more sure, that what this enables me to do, is according to the Scripture, than I am that the length of it is contrary to it.†

"I have often thought of a saying of Dr. Hayward's, when he examined me for Priest's Orders ; 'Do you know what

\* Nothing is of so much importance.

† Mr. Wesley wore his hair remarkably long and flowing on his shoulders. As he was often indisposed, his mother thought it injured his health, and was very desirous that he should have it taken off ; "I verily believe," says she in a letter, "you will never have any good state of health, while you keep your hair." He objected against parting with his hair, because it would occasion some increase of his expences, which he could not afford, without giving less to the poor. His brother Samuel took a middle way, and advised him to have his hair cut shorter ; and this advice he followed.

‘you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. ‘He that would live a Christian Priest, ought to know, that, ‘whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect every man’s hand should be against him.’ It is not strange that every man’s hand, who is not a Christian, should be against him that endeavours to be so. But is it not hard, that even those who are with us should be against us; that a man’s enemies, in some degree, should be those of the same household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to this business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, many of those who are before as well as behind him, will lay stumbling-blocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough, another for having made no greater progress; another for going too far, which perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two. For this comes from all people of all sorts; not only infidels, not only half Christians, but some of the best of men are very apt to make this reflection, ‘He lays unnecessary burdens upon himself; he is too precise; he does what God has ‘no where required to be done.’ True, he has not required it of those who are perfect; and even as to those who are not, all men are not required to use all means; but every man is required to use those which he finds most useful to himself. And who can tell better than himself, whether he finds them so or no? *‘Who knoweth the things of a man better than the spirit of a man that is in him?’*

“ This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it once for all, and to tell you, freely and clearly, those general positions on which I ground all those practices, for which, as you would have seen had you read that paper through, I am generally accused of singularity. (1.) As to the end of my being; I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot be too happy, or therefore too holy; and thence infer that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize of our high calling, and the more of my thoughts and words and

actions are directly pointed at the attainment of it, the better. (2.) As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. (3.) As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds of things indifferent in themselves: Whatever I know to do me hurt, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from: Whatever I know to do me good, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

“ But it will be said, I am whimsical. True, and what then? If by whimsical be meant simply *singular*, I own it; if *singular without any reason*, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give a reason, to any that asks me, of every custom wherein I differ from the world. I grant, in many single actions I differ unreasonably from others, but not wilfully; no, I shall extremely thank any one who will teach me how to help it.

“ As to my being formal; if by that be meant that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, it is very true; but how shall I help it?—If by formal be meant that I am serious, this too is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth, I grant, is very fit for you; but does it follow that it is fit for me? Are the same tempers, any more than the same words and actions, fit for all circumstances? If you are to rejoice evermore, because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same while they continually assault me? You are very glad, because you are ‘*passed from death to life*’; well, but let him be afraid who knows not whether he is to live or die. Whether this be my condition or no, who can tell better than myself? Him who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can.”

December 11, Mr. Samuel Wesley answered this letter, and felt himself a little hurt at some expressions in it. There was indeed a delicate irony in it, which he must have felt, and the force of which he endeavoured to ward off. Some time

afterwards the subject of seriousness was again renewed, and several letters passed between them. At first they seemed to differ in opinion; but when each had explained himself, they were more agreed. Mr. Samuel Wesley closes the debate in the following words: "To the best of my memory your character was but little in my thoughts, and my own not at all, in my late letters. I never designed to justify myself; perhaps my laughter is particularly blameable, as my temper is serious, severe, and melancholy.—Thus ends our notable dispute, or rather we have had none at all. For you are only against excessive laughter, which I was never for; and only for seriousness, which I was never against. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. And now methinks each of us may say to the other, as Dick does to Matt—

"That people lived and died I knew,  
An hour ago, as well as you."

About this time, their father came up to London, and from thence took an excursion to Oxford, to see what his sons were doing, and in what spirit and temper of mind they were. On his return to London he wrote a few lines to Mrs. Wesley, Jan. 5th, in which he says; "I had yours on New-year's-day, on which I returned in one day from Oxford, not very well; but well paid both for my expence and labour, by the shining piety of our two sons, of whom I shall write soon more at large." This gives the fullest evidence, that the father did not then think his sons were carrying matters too far.

When Mr Wesley first set out in this religious course of life, he was fully convinced that he did not possess that state of mind which the Gospel describes as the privilege of true believers in Christ; but he expected that the practice of every duty to the utmost of his power would lead him into this state of mind, and give him peace and joy in God. This effect did not follow; he was often dull, languid, and unaffected in the use of the most solemn ordinances. This both distressed

and perplexed him, so that he seemed at a loss which way to proceed, to obtain the happiness and security he wanted. He was now “*bringing forth fruit meet for repentance,*” and so far he was right. But he thought he had the faith of the Gospel; in this he was deceived. We shall see him convinced of unbelief, and bitterly lamenting the delusion. He looked for *righteousness, peace, and joy*, without being *justified*. In this state of perplexity, he wrote to his mother on the 28th of February; and after mentioning Mr. Morgan’s situation, he observes: “One consideration is enough to make me assent to his and your judgment concerning the holy sacrament; which is, that we cannot allow Christ’s human nature to be present in it, without allowing either CON- or TRANS-substantiation. But that his Divinity is so united to us then, as he never is but to worthy receivers, I firmly believe, though the manner of that union is utterly a mystery to me.

“That none but worthy receivers should find this effect, is not strange to me, when I observe, how small effect many means of improvement have upon an unprepared mind. Mr. Morgan and my brother were affected as they ought, by the observations you made on that glorious subject: but though my understanding approved what was excellent, yet my heart did not feel it. Why was this, but because it was pre-engaged by those affections with which wisdom will not dwell? because the animal mind cannot relish those truths which are spiritually discerned. Yet I have those writings which the Good Spirit gave to that end!\* I have many of those which he hath since assisted his servants to give us: I have retirement to apply these to my own soul daily; I have means both of public and private prayer; and, above all, of partaking in that sacrament once a week. What shall I do, to make all these blessings effectual, to gain from them that mind which was also in Christ Jesus?

\* Warburton contended that there was no Holy Spirit *now*, as given to man, except those writings; and so it was left to the *carnal mind, which is enmity against God*, to apply them!

“To all who give signs of their not being strangers to it, I propose this question—and why not to you rather than any? Shall I quite break off my pursuit of all learning, but what immediately tends to practice? I once desired to make a fair show in languages and philosophy: but it is past; there is a more excellent way, and if I cannot attain to any progress in the one, without throwing up all thoughts of the other, why, Fare it well! Yet a little while and we shall all be equal in knowledge, if we are in virtue.

“You say, ‘you have renounced the world.’ And what have I been doing all this time? What have I done, ever since I was born? Why, I have been plunging myself into it more and more. It is enough: ‘*Awake, thou that sleepest.*’ Is there not ‘*one Lord, one Spirit, one hope of our calling?*’ One way of attaining that hope? Then I am to renounce the world, as well as you. That is the very thing I want to do; to draw off my affections from this world, and fix them on a better. But how? What is the surest and the shortest way? Is it not to be humble? Surely this is a large step in the way. But the question recurs, how am I to do this? To own the necessity of it, is not to be humble. In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed. Who knows but in this too you may be successful? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening, which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not but it would be as useful now for correcting my heart, as it was then for forming my judgment.

“When I observe how fast life flies away, and how slow improvement comes, I think one can never be too much afraid of dying before one has learned to live: I mean, even in the course of nature. For were I sure that ‘the silver cord should not be violently loosed;’ that ‘the wheel should not be broken at the cistern,’ till it was quite worn away by its own motion;

• Neither the mother nor the son seems to have had any notion of their want of the proper Christian Faith.

yet what a time would this give me for such a work ! A moment to transact the business of eternity ! What are forty years in comparison of this ? So that were I sure of what never man yet was sure of, how little would it alter the case ? How justly still might I cry out,

“ Downward I hasten to my destin’d place ;  
There none obtain thy aid, none sing thy praise !  
Soon shall I lie in death’s deep ocean drown’d ;  
Is mercy there, is sweet forgiveness found ?  
O save me yet, while on the brink I stand ;  
Rebuke these storms, and set me safe on land.  
O make my longings and thy mercy sure !  
Thou art the God of power.”

This letter shews an ardent mind, wholly occupied in pursuit of a saving knowledge of God ; but embarrassed and perplexed, not knowing which way to turn, and yet willing to sacrifice the dearest object in life to obtain the end in view.

Mr. Morgan had now been ill more than twelve months ; and was so greatly reduced, that he became a burden to himself, and totally useless to others. In this stage of his disease ; his understanding sometimes appeared deranged ; he became more changeable in his temper than usual, and inconsistent in his conversation. But this was purely the effect of his disease ; not the least symptom of the kind having ever appeared, till long after his health had declined.

His father, being fully informed of the state of his health, wrote to him in March, and told him, that he should no longer be limited in his expences to any fixed allowance, and that such sums as were necessary for his health should be immediately remitted to him ; but strongly insisted, that no part of it should be given away, and that he should lay it out in recreation, medicine, and such other matters as might be necessary for the recovery and support of his health. He then says, “ You cannot conceive what a noise that ridiculous Society in which

you are engaged, has made here. Besides the particulars of the great follies of it at Oxford, which to my great concern I have often heard repeated, it gave me sensible trouble to hear, that you were noted for going into the villages about Holt ; calling their children together, and teaching them their prayers and catechism, and giving them a shilling at your departure. I could not but advise with a wise, pious, and learned clergyman : He told me, that he has known the worst of consequences follow from such blind zeal ; and plainly satisfied me, that it was a thorough mistake of true piety and religion. I proposed writing to some prudent and good man at Oxford to reason with you on these points, and to convince you that you were in a wrong way. He said, in a generous mind, as he took yours to be, the admonition and advice of a father would make a deeper impression than all the exhortations of others. He concluded, that you were young as yet, and that your judgment was not come to its maturity ; but as soon as your judgment improved, and on the advice of a true friend, you would see the error of your way, and think, as he does, that you may walk uprightly and safely, without endeavouring to out-do all the good bishops, clergy, and other pious and good men of the present and past ages : which God Almighty give you grace and sense to understand aright!" What a genuine picture of *the religion of the world!*

In the month of April, Mr. Samuel Wesley visited Oxford, and spent a few days there ; no doubt with a view chiefly to satisfy himself, on the spot, of the truth or falsehood of the various accounts that were given him of his two brothers. When he returned to London, he wrote a hasty poetical epistle to his brother Charles, in which he has clearly expressed his opinion of their conduct, and the views he had formed of their opponents. The latter part of it refers to the unhappy situation of Mr. Morgan.



APRIL 20, 1732.

THOUGH neither are o'er-stock'd with precious time,  
 If I can write it, you may read my rhyme;  
 And find an hour to answer, I suppose,  
 In verse harmonious or in humble prose,  
 What I, when late at Oxford, could not say,  
 My friends so numerous, and so short my stay.

Let useless questions first aside be thrown,  
 Which all men may reply to, or that none:  
 As whether Doctors doubt the D— will die;  
 Or F—— still retains his courtesy?  
 Or J——n dies daily in conceit,  
 Dies without death, and walks without his feet?  
 What time the library completes its shell?  
 What hand revives the discipline of *Fell*?  
 What house for learning shall rewards prepare,  
 Which orators and poets justly share,  
 And see a second Atterbury there?

}

Say, does your christian purpose still proceed,  
 T' assist in every shape the wretches' need?  
 'To free the prisoner from his anxious gaol,  
 When friends forsake him, and relations fail?  
 Or yet with nobler charity conspire  
 To snatch the guilty from eternal fire?  
 Has your small squadron firm in trial stood,  
 Without preciseness, singularly good?  
 Safe march they on 'twixt dangerous extremes  
 Of mad profaneness and enthusiasts' dreams,  
 Constant in prayer, while God approves their pains,  
 His Spirit cheers them and his blood sustains?  
 Unmov'd by pride or anger, can they hear  
 The foolish laughter, or the envious flee?  
 No wonder, wicked men blaspheme their care,  
 The devil always dreads offensive war:  
 Where heav'nly zeal the sons of night pursues,  
 Likely to gain, and certain not to lose;  
 The sleeping conscience wakes by dangers near,  
 And pours the light in, they so greatly fear.

But hold, perhaps this dry religious toil  
 May damp the genius, and the scholar spoil.

Perhaps facetious foes to meddling fools  
 Shine in the class, and sparkle in the schools ;  
 Your arts excel, your eloquence out-go,  
 And soar like Virgil or like Tully flow ;  
 Have brightest turns and deepest learning shewn,  
 And prov'd your wit mistaken by their own.  
 If not—the wights should moderately rail,  
 Whose total merit, summ'd from fair detail,  
 Is, saunt'ring, sleep, and smoke, and wine, and ale. }

How contraries may meet without design !  
 And *pretty gentlemen* and *bigots* join !  
 A pert young rake observes, with saucy airs,  
 “ That none can know the world, who say their pray'rs : ”  
 And Rome in middle ages used to grant,  
 The most devout were still most ignorant.  
 So, when old bloody Noll our ruin wrought,  
 Was ignorance the best devotion thought ;  
 His crop-hair'd saints all marks of sense deface,  
 And preach, that learning is a foe to grace :  
 English was spoke in schools, and Latin ceas'd,  
 They quite reform'd the language of the beast.

One or two questions more before I end,  
 That much concern a brother and a friend.  
 Does John seem bent beyond his strength to go,  
 To his frail carcase literally foe ?  
 Lavish of health, as if in haste to die,  
 And shorten time, t' ensure eternity ?  
 Does Morgan weakly think his time mis-spent ?  
 Of his best actions can he now repent ?  
 Others, their sins with reason just deplore,  
 The guilt remaining when the pleasure's o'er :  
 Since the foundations of the world were laid,  
 Shall he for virtue first himself upbraid ?  
 Shall he, what most men to their sins deny,  
 Shew pains for alms, remorse for piety ?  
 Can he the Sacred Eucharist decline ?  
 What Clement poisons here the bread and wine ?  
 Or does his sad disease possess him whole,  
 And taint alike his body and his soul ?  
 If to renounce his graces he decree,  
 O ! that he could transfer the stock to me !

Alas ! enough what mortal e'er can do,  
For Him who made him and redeem'd him too ?  
Zeal may to map beyond desert be shew'd,  
No supererogation stands to God.

As the persons united in the Society at Oxford were all zealous members of the Church of England, by the advice of Mr. Clayton, who had now joined them, they added, to their former practices, a regular observance of the fasts of the church ; the general neglect of which, they thought, was by no means a sufficient excuse for neglecting them.

Being in London, in the month of July, Mr. Wesley went down to Putney, to pay Mr. Law a visit, which was the introduction to a personal acquaintance with each other. Mr. Wesley occasionally repeated his visits, and a friendly correspondence followed, which lasted several years. From this time, he began to read the *Theologia Germanica*, and other mystic writers, of which I shall afterwards have occasion to take some notice. But neither the writings, nor the man, ever shewed him his want of faith. They were not calculated to do so, as we shall see in the sequel.

He also now became known to many pious and respectable individuals in London, and heartily approved of the conduct of those well-disposed persons, who associated together to carry on a plan of suppressing vice, and spreading religion and virtue among the people ; and, on the 3d of August, was admitted into " the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge."

Mr. Wesley, and those associated with him, now suffered the entire loss of Mr. Morgan. He left Oxford on the 5th of June, and died in Dublin on the 26th of August. That this is the true time of his death, is evident from a letter from his father, to Mr. Charles Wesley, dated September the 5th. He says, " From the intimacy which I understood to have been contracted between you and my dear son, I make no

doubt but you must have some concern upon you at the reading the account of his death, as I have the greatest in writing it. His distemper threw him into a fever, of which he died the 26th past, about four in the morning. This is the soonest that I could attempt writing any thing about him, since my affliction was consummated.—You see, I make very free with you ; but the candour and generosity for which I have heard you commended, embolden me to it ; and I shall, I hope, find some opportunities to make amends, and beg you will, upon all occasions, let me know when I can be serviceable to you in this kingdom.”

During the course of this summer, Mr. Wesley made two journeys to Epworth. In these excursions, he often went considerably out of his way, to spend a night, and sometimes two or three, with a friend ; most frequently with the parents or relations of some of his pupils. In the first journey, while he was standing on the garden wall at a friend's house, it fell flat under him ; but he escaped unhurt. His second journey was in order to meet his brother Samuel, &c. at Epworth, and that the whole family might once more assemble together, before their final separation by death. This meeting must have been very affecting ; for as their father was growing infirm, and his son Samuel was now going to reside wholly at Tiverton, in Devon, it was not probable they would ever see each other again. Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 23d of September ; and as soon as it was known there that Mr. Morgan was dead, a report was propagated, that the rigorous fasting he had imposed on himself, by the advice of Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley, had hastened his death. As this report was highly prejudicial to their character, and might hinder their usefulness ; and as it was probable it would reach the father, and might afflict him, and prejudice him more deeply against his son's conduct, and the persons with whom he had been connected ; Mr. Wesley thought it best to write to him, and state the matter as it really was. His letter is dated the

18th of October, this year.\* “The occasion,” says he, “of giving you this trouble, is of a very extraordinary nature. On Sunday last I was informed, as no doubt you will be ere long, that my brother and I had killed your son;—that the rigorous fasting which he had imposed upon himself, by our advice, had increased his illness and hastened his death. Now, though, considering it in itself, *it is a very small thing with me to be judged of man’s judgment*; yet, as the being thought guilty of so mischievous an imprudence might make me less able to do the work I came into the world for, I am obliged to clear myself of it, by observing to you, as I have done to others, that your son left off fasting about a year and an half since, and that it is not yet half a year since I began to practise it.

“I must not let this opportunity slip of doing my part towards giving you a juster notion of some other particulars, relating both to him and myself, which have been industriously misrepresented to you.

“In March last he received a letter from you, which not being able to read, he desired me to read to him: Several of the expressions I perfectly remember, and shall do till I too am called hence.—In one practice for which you blamed your son, I am only concerned as a friend, not as a partner. Your own account of it was, *in effect*, this: ‘He frequently went ‘into poor people’s houses about Holt, called their children ‘together, and instructed them in their duty to God, their ‘neighbour, and themselves. He likewise explained to them ‘the necessity of private as well as public prayer, and provided ‘them with such forms as were best suited to their several

\* In the printed copies of this letter the date is 1730. But in a manuscript, in Mr. Charles Wesley’s hand-writing, the date is 1732, which is the true date of it, as appears from Mr. Morgan’s account of his son’s death. The true date may be collected from the letter itself, compared with Mr. John Wesley’s Short History of Methodism, which fixes the time when they became acquainted with Mr. Clayton.

‘ capacities ; and being well apprised how the success of his  
 ‘ endeavours depended on their good-will towards him, he some-  
 ‘ times distributed among them a little of that money which he  
 ‘ had saved from gaming and other fashionable expences of the  
 ‘ place.’—This is the first charge against him, and I will refer  
 it to your own judgment, whether it be fitter to have a place  
 in the catalogue of his faults, or of those virtues for which he  
 is now *numbered among the sons of God* ?

“ If all the persons concerned in ‘ that ridiculous society,  
 ‘ whose follies you have so often heard repeated,’ could but give  
 such a proof of their deserving the glorious title which was  
 once bestowed upon them, they would be contented that their  
*lives too should be counted madness, and their end thought to be*  
*without honour.* But the truth is, their title to holiness stands  
 upon much less stable foundations, as you will easily perceive  
 when you know the ground of this wonderful outcry, which  
 it seems England itself is not wide enough to contain.”

He then gives Mr. Morgan a short history of their little  
 society ; informing him what their practices were, and of their  
 care to consult wise, learned, and pious clergymen, in every  
 step they had taken, in the manner described above. He sub-  
 joins, “ As for the names of Methodists, Supererogation-men,  
 and so on, with which some of our neighbours are pleased to  
 compliment us, we do not conceive ourselves to be under any  
 obligation to regard them, much less to take them for argu-  
 ments. To the law and to the testimony we appeal, whereby  
 we ought to be judged. If by these it can be proved we are  
 in an error, we will immediately and gladly retract it : If not,  
*we have not so learned Christ,* as to renounce any part of his  
 service, though men should say all manner of evil against us,  
 with more judgment and as little truth as hitherto.—Your son  
 already stands before the judgment-seat of Him who judges  
 righteous judgment ; at the brightness of whose presence the  
 clouds remove : His eyes are open, and he sees clearly whether  
 it was ‘ blind zeal and a thorough mistake of true religion

that hurried him on in the error of his way,' or whether he acted like a faithful and wise servant, who, from a just sense that his time was short, made haste to finish his work before his Lord's coming, that, when *laid in the balance*, he might not *be found wanting*."

This well-timed letter, containing a simple narrative of facts, fully satisfied Mr. Morgan. His answer, which is dated November 25, shews him to have been a man of moderation and a friend to piety. It is as follows: "Your favour of the 20th past was delayed in its passage, I believe, by contrary winds, or it had not been so long unanswered. I give entire credit to every thing and every fact you relate. It was ill-judged of my poor son to take to fasting, with regard to his health, of which I knew nothing, or I should have advised him against it. He was inclined to piety and virtue from his infancy. I must own, I was much concerned at the strange accounts which were spread here, of some extraordinary practices of a religious society in which he had engaged at Oxford, (which, you may be sure, lost nothing in the carriage,) lest, through his youth and immaturity of judgment, he might be hurried into zeal and enthusiastic notions, that would prove pernicious. But now, indeed, that piety and holiness of life which he practised, affords me some comfort in the midst of my affliction for the loss of him; having full assurance of his being for ever happy. The good account you are pleased to give of your own and your friends' conduct, in point of duty and religious offices, and the zealous approbation of them by the good old gentleman your father, signified in a manner and style becoming the best of men, reconciles and recommends that method of life to me, and makes me almost wish that I were one amongst you. I am very much obliged to you for the great pains you have been at, in transcribing so long and so particular an account for my perusal, and shall be always ready to vindicate you from any calumny or aspersion that I shall hear cast upon you. I am much obliged for your and

your brother's great civilities and assistances to my dearest son. I thank the author of those lines you sent me, for the regard he has shewn to his memory. If ever I can be serviceable to any of you in this kingdom, I beg you will let me know."—This correspondence continued some time between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Morgan ;\* and the year following, Mr. Morgan sent his only surviving son to Oxford, and placed him under Mr. Wesley's care. This was the strongest proof he could possibly give, that he approved of his conduct.

The character of that lamented young gentleman, the elder of Mr. Morgan's sons, is well drawn up by Mr. Samuel Wesley, jun. in the following poetic tribute to his memory :—

#### ELEGIAC VERSES ON THE DEATH OF MR. MORGAN.

*" We fools counted his life madness."*

If aught beneath them happy souls attend,  
 Let Morgan hear the triumph of a friend,  
 And hear well pleas'd. Let libertines so gay,  
 With careless indolence, despise the lay :  
 Let critic wits, and fools for laughter born,  
 Their verdict pass with supercilious scorn :  
 Let jovial crowds, by wine their senses drown'd,  
 Stammer out censure in their frantic round :  
 Let yawning sluggards faint dislike display,  
 Who, while they trust to-morrow, lose to-day :  
 Let such as these the sacred strains condemn ;  
 For 'tis true glory to be hiss'd by them.

Wise in his prime, he waited not for noon,  
 Convinced that mortal never liv'd too soon.  
 As if foreboding here his little stay,  
 He made his morning bear the heat of day :  
 Fix'd, while unfading glory he pursues,  
 No ill to hazard, and no good to lose.  
 No fair occasion glides unheeded by ;  
 Snatching the golden moments as they fly, }  
 He by few fleeting hours ensures eternity. }

\* Their letters are now before me.



Friendship's warm beams his artless breast inspire,  
 And tend'rest rev'rence for a much-lov'd sire.  
 He dar'd for heaven this flatt'ring world forego,  
 Ardent to teach, as diligent to know ;  
 Unwarp'd by sensual views or vulgar aims,  
 By idle riches, or by idler names ;  
 Fearful of sin in every close disguise,  
 Unmov'd by threat'ning or by glozing lies.  
 Seldom, indeed, the wicked came so far,  
 Forc'd by his piety to defensive war ;  
 Whose zeal for other men's salvation shown,  
 Beyond the reach of hell secur'd his own :  
 Gladd'ning the poor, where'er his steps he turn'd,  
 Where pin'd the orphan, or the widow mourn'd ;  
 Where prisoners sigh'd beneath guilt's horrid stain,  
 The worst confinement and the heaviest chain,  
 Where death's sad shade the uninstructed sight  
 Veil'd with thick darkness in the land of light.  
 Our Saviour thus fulfill'd his great design,  
 (If human we may liken to divine,)  
 Heal'd each disease that bodies frail endure,  
 And preach'd th' unhop'd-for Gospel to the poor.

To means of grace the last respect he shew'd,  
 Nor sought new paths, as wiser than his God :  
 Their sacred strength preserv'd him from extremes  
 Of empty outside, or enthusiast dreams.

He knew, that works our faith must here employ,  
 And that 'tis heaven's great business to enjoy.  
 Fix'd on that heaven, he death's approaches saw,  
 Nor vainly murmur'd at our nature's law ;  
 Repin'd not that his youth so soon should go,  
 Nor griev'd for fleeting pleasures here below.  
 Of sharpest anguish scorning to complain,  
 He fills with mirth the intervals of pain :  
 Not only unappall'd, but joyful, sees  
 The dark cold passage that must lead to peace :  
 Strong with immortal bloom, secure to rise,  
 The tears for ever banish'd from his eyes.

Who now regrets, his early youth would spend  
 The life so nobly that so soon should end ?  
 Who blames the stripling for performing more  
 Than doctors grave and prelates of three-score ?

Who now esteems his fervour indiscreet,  
His prayers too frequent, or his alms too great ?  
Who thinks, where blest he reigns beyond the sky,  
His crown too radiant, or his throne too high ?  
Who, but the fiend who once his course withstood,  
And whisper'd—" Stay till fifty, to be good ?"  
Sure, if believ'd, t' obtain his hellish aim,  
Adjourning to the time that never came !

The young gentleman mentioned above was then the only son of Mr. Morgan, and of a very different disposition from his deceased brother. His father seems to have been what is usually called " a very good sort of man." In the correspondence that took place between them, he informs Mr. Charles Wesley, that it was three years and a quarter since his son left school, " being then fit for the University, and at least as good a scholar as his brother was when he went to Oxford." He observes, " I then purchased an office for him in the Law; but I fear he has read very little of Greek or Latin since that time, and that he has forgotten a great deal of what he had learned at school; but I don't think his parts very bad. He was nineteen years of age last July, and is very lusty of his age. I believe he is five feet ten inches high. He has been somewhat gay, and gone to plays and balls, but addicted to no vice. He has often wished rather to be put forward in his learning, than to stick to an office, in which I am now inclined to indulge him. If it be advisable to put him in this new way of life, you may be sure I can think of no other for his tutor but yourself."—Mr. Charles Wesley, thinking the young man would be safer with his brother John, consigned him to his care, with which arrangement Mr. Morgan was well satisfied.

The young gentleman had, however, very naturally, other views than those of his careful and benevolent father. He desired that he might be entered a Gentleman Commoner

of Lincoln, under Mr. John Wesley, in order that, as he expressed himself to his father, he “ might have a little superiority among his cotemporaries, and not be slighted or despised by them ;” promising to “ be as conformable to all the rules and discipline of the College as if he were a Servitor.” With this request also his father complied.

Appearing now in the Gentlemen Commoners’ room, as Mr. Morgan’s heir, he became an object of attraction to his gay associates. He brought a favourite greyhound with him, which he introduced also into the College,—a pretty plain indication how much he wished to conform to the rules. But all would not do. It was soon known that he was Mr. Wesley’s pupil, and the name of *Methodist* was fastened upon him. He became very uneasy at this ; and, after some time, made known his situation to his father, in a long letter, and in terms as dolorous and as queer as Bishop Lavington himself could have done, if he had been then a Fresh-man. He concluded with desiring rather to return to his office, than to suffer what he did from his companions, by being Mr. Wesley’s pupil. His tutor having discovered this, immediately wrote the following letter to Mr. Morgan :

“ *Jan. 14th, 1734.*

“ SIR,

“ Going yesterday into your son’s room, I providentially cast my eyes upon a paper that lay upon the table, and, contrary to my custom, read a line or two of it, which soon determined me to read the rest. It was a copy of his last letter to you ; whereby, by the signal blessing of God, I came to the knowledge of his real sentiments, both with regard to myself and to several other points of the highest importance.

“ In the account he gives of me, and those friends who are as my own soul, are some things TRUE:—as, that we imagine it is our bounden duty to spend our whole lives in the service of Him that gave them, or in other words, ‘ *whether we eat or*

*drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God;* that we endeavour, as we are able, to relieve the poor by buying books and other necessities for them; that some of us read prayers at the prison once a day; that I administer the Sacrament once a month, and preach there as often as I am not engaged elsewhere; that we sit together five evenings in a week; and that we observe, as far as our health will permit, the fasts of the Church. Some things are FALSE, but taken upon trust, so that I hope Mr. Morgan believed them true: as that we almost starve ourselves: that one of us had like lately to have lost his life, by too great abstinence; that we endeavour to reform notorious whores, and to lay spirits in haunted houses; that we all rise every day at five o'clock; and that I am President of the Society. As strange as it may appear, that one present upon the spot should so far vary from the truth in his relation, I can easily account, not only for his mistake, but for his designed misrepresentation too. The company he is almost daily with, (from whom indeed I should have divided him, had not your letters, coming in the article of time, tied my hands,) abundantly accounts for the former; as his desire to lessen your regard for me, and thereby obviate the force of any future complaint, which he foresaw I might some time hence have occasion to make to you, does for the latter: And indeed I am not without apprehension, that some such occasion may shortly come. I need not describe that apprehension to you. Is there not a cause? Is he not surrounded, even in this recess, with those who are often more pernicious than open libertines?—men who retain something of outward decency, and nothing else; who seriously idle away the whole day, and reputably revel till midnight, and if not drunken themselves, yet encouraging and applauding those that are so; who have no more of the form than of the power of godliness, and though they do pretty often drop in at the public prayers, coming after the most solemn part of them is over, yet expressly disown any obligation to attend

them. It is true, they have not yet laughed your son out of all his diligence ; but how long it will be before they have, God knows. They zealously endeavour it at all convenient opportunities ; and temporal views are as unable to support him under such an attack as his slender notions of religion are ; of which, he often says, he thinks he shall have enough, if he constantly says his prayers at home, and in the chapel. As to my advice on this or any other head, they had secured him pretty well before ; and your authority added to theirs has supplied him with armour of proof against it.

“ I now beg to know what you would have me do ? Shall I sit still, and let him swim down the stream ? Or shall I plunge in, bound, as I am, hand and foot, and oppose myself to his company, his inclinations, and his father ? Why, you say, I am to incite him to live a sober, virtuous, and religious life. Nay, but first let us agree what religion is. I take religion to be, not the bare saying over so many prayers, morning and evening, in public or in private ; not any thing superadded now and then to a careless or worldly life ; but a constant ruling habit of soul ; a renewal of our minds in the image of God ; a recovery of the Divine likeness ; a still increasing conformity of heart and life to the pattern of our most Holy Redeemer. But if this be religion, if this be the way to life which our blessed Lord hath marked out for us, how can any one, while he keeps close to this way, be charged with running into extremes ? It is true, there is no going out of it, either to the right-hand or to the left, without running into an extreme ; and to prevent this, the wisdom of the Church has, in all ages, appointed guides for the unexperienced, lest they should wander into bye-paths, and seek death in the error of their life. But while he is in the right way, what fear is there of your son’s going too fast in it ? I appeal to your own experience. Have you observed any such disposition in him, as gives you ground to suspect he will love God too well, or keep himself too ‘ *unspotted from the world* ?’ Or has his past

life been such, as that you have just reason to apprehend the remainder of it should too much resemble that of our blessed Master? I will go further. Have you remarked, in the various scenes you have gone through, that youth in general is apt to run into the extreme of piety? Is it to *this* excess that the fervour of their blood, and the impetuosity of their passions, hurry them? But we may not stop here. Is there any fear, is there any possibility, that any son of Adam, of whatever age or degree, should too faithfully do the will of his Creator, or too exactly tread in the steps of his Redeemer? Suppose the time now come when you feel within yourself, that the silver cord of life is loosed, that the dust is returning to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it. The snares of death overtake you. Nothing but pain is on the one hand, eternity on the other. The tears of the friends that surround your bed, bear witness with the pangs of your own heart, that it has few pulses more to beat before you launch out into the sea without a shore; before the soul shall part from the quivering lips, and stand naked before the judgment-seat of God. Will you then be content with having served God according to the custom of the place you was in? Will you regret your having been, even from your youth, more pure and holy than the rest of mankind? Will you complain to the ministering spirits who receive your new-born soul, that you have been over-zealous in the love of your Master? Ask not me, a poor, fallible, sinful mortal, never safe either from the snares of ill example or the treachery of my own heart; but ask *them*, ask Him who died to make you and me and your son zealous of good works,—whether you may be excused for your solicitude, your too successful solicitude, to prevent his falling into this extreme? How needless has he made that solicitude already! But, I spare you. The good God be merciful to us both! Think not, Sir, that interest occasions the concern I shew: I abhor the thought. From the moment my brother told me, ‘*Mr. Morgan will be*

*safer with you than me ; I have desired him to be sent to you,*—I determined (though I never mentioned it to him,) to restore to him whatsoever is paid me upon Mr. Morgan's account : It is, with regard to me, an accursed thing. There shall no such cleave unto me. I have sufficient motives, without this, to assist your son, so long as he will accept my assistance. He is the brother of my dear friend, the son of one that was my friend till great names warped him from his purpose ; and, what is infinitely more, the creature of my God, and the redeemed and fellow-heir of my Saviour.

“ That neither the cares of the world, nor the fair speeches and venerable titles of any who set up their rest therein, may prevent our attaining our better inheritance, is the earnest prayer of,

“ SIR,

“ Your most obliged,

“ And most obedient Servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY ”

“ RICHARD MORGAN, Esq., &c.”

I have inserted this letter, (which was never before published,) because it exhibits a true guide of youth, in a most striking light of devoted faithfulness ; and because it may happily teach some, who sigh for the conversion of *the world*, while they strangely neglect *those who are round about them* and are their special charge, how awfully they mistake the way of God ! “ *He who knew what was in man,*” and who cannot err, has said, “ *He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much.*” How gloriously this was realised, in the vast labour and great success of this devoted servant of Christ, will be seen, though very imperfectly, in these Memoirs. It is evident, that not the son only, but the infatuated, though well-meaning father, occupied Mr. Wesley's affectionate heart. What effect this earnest expostulation had on both, we know not fully ; but it will be seen *in that day*. The Lord was about to lead

his great and prepared instrument, out of the shallows of individual and vexatious effort, into a wide field of labour, and into a harvest of souls, that shall only be fully known when “*the reapers are the angels.*”

On the 1st of January, 1733, Mr. Wesley preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on “*The Circumcision of the Heart,*” Romans ii, 29. In this discourse, which is printed in the second volume of his Sermons, he explained with great clearness, and energy of language, his views of the Christian Salvation to be attained in this life; from which he never varied, in any material point, to the day of his death. He was indeed, at this time, almost wholly ignorant of the Gospel method of *attaining* this salvation; but he sought it with his whole heart, according to the knowledge he then had, and was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing he possessed in the world, for the attainment of it. The truth is, he was, like Saul of Tarsus, “*alive without the law.*” He was not yet “*slain by the commandment,*” and therefore did not come to God in his true character. He who “*justifieth only the ungodly,*” could not therefore justify him: The faith which he had at that time could not be *imputed to him for righteousness*, and hence he had not “*peace and joy in believing.*”

His father was now in a bad state of health, and seemed declining apace. On this account he set out on horseback for Epworth, in the beginning of January. As he was passing over the bridge beyond Daventry, his horse fell over it with him; but he again escaped unhurt! For these interpositions of Providence, Mr. Wesley did not fail to give the tribute of praise and thanksgiving to his Divine Deliverer.

The state of his father's health induced his parents to turn their thoughts to the means of obtaining the Living of Epworth for him, in case of his father's demise. This was mentioned to him when he was with them, but he seems to have then but little attended to it. After his return to Oxford, in February, he wrote to his mother on the subject. “You



observed," says he, "when I was with you, that I was very indifferent as to the having or not having the Living of Epworth. I was indeed utterly unable to determine either way; and that for this reason: I know, if I could stand my ground here, and approve myself a faithful minister of our blessed Jesus, by honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report; then there would not be a place under the heaven like this, for improvement in every good work. But whether I can stem the torrent which I saw then, but see now much more, rolling down from all sides upon me,—that I knew not. It is true, there is One who can yet either command the great water-flood that it shall not come nigh me, '*or make a way for his redeemed to pass through.*' But then something must be done on my part: and should He give me, even that most equitable condition, '*According to thy faith be it unto thee,*' yet how shall I fulfil it? Why He will look to that too;—my father and you helping together with your prayers, that our faith fail us not."

In May, he set out again for Epworth, and took Manchester in his way, to see his friend Mr. Clayton, who had now left Oxford. From thence he proceeded to Epworth, and returned to Manchester on Saturday the 2d of June. The next day he preached three times, once at the Old Church, again in Salford, and at St. Anne's. When he reached Oxford, he perceived the bad effects of his absence upon his pupils, and the members of their little Society. He now found himself surrounded with enemies triumphing over him, and friends deserting him; he saw the fruits of his labours in danger of being blasted before they had attained maturity. But he stood firm as a rock; and being conscious of his own integrity, and that he had nothing in view but to serve God "*in righteousness and true holiness,*" and to benefit his neighbour, he viewed his situation without emotion. He wrote to his father in the simplicity and fulness of his heart; and this letter shews the man, and his manner of viewing difficulties,

infinitely better than any description which another can give of him. It is dated the 13th of June.

“ The effects of my last journey, I believe, will make me more cautious of staying any time from Oxford for the future ; at least till I have no pupils to take care of, which probably will be within a year or two. One of my young gentlemen told me at my return, that he was more and more afraid of singularity ; another, that he had read an excellent piece of Mr. Locke’s, which had convinced him of the mischief of regarding authority. Both of them agreed, that the observing of Wednesday as a fast was an unnecessary singularity ; the Catholic Church (that is, the majority of it) having long since repealed, by contrary custom, the injunction she formerly gave concerning it. A third, who could not yield to this argument, has been convinced by a fever, and Dr. Frewin. Our seven and twenty communicants at St. Mary’s, were on Monday shrunk to five ; and the day before, the last of Mr. Clayton’s pupils, who continued with us, informed me, that he did not design to meet us any more.

“ My ill success, as they call it, seems to be what has frightened every one away from a falling house. On Sunday I was considering the matter a little more nearly ; and imagined, that all the ill consequences of my singularity were reducible to three—diminution of fortune, loss of friends, and of reputation.—As to my FORTUNE, I well know, though perhaps others do not, that I could not have borne a larger than I have : and as for that most plausible excuse for desiring it, ‘ While I have so little, I cannot do the good I would ; ’ I ask, Can you do the good, God would have you do ? It is enough ! Look no further.—For FRIENDS, they were either trifling or serious : if triflers, fare them well ; a noble escape : if serious, those who are more serious are left, whom the others would rather have opposed than forwarded in the service they have done, and still do us. If it be said, ‘ But these

‘ may leave you too ; for they are no firmer than the others ‘ were.’ First, I doubt that fact ; but next, suppose they should, we hope then they would only teach us a nobler and harder lesson, than any they have done hitherto ; ‘ *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man.*’—And as for REPUTATION, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master’s service, yet there is a better than that, *a clean heart, a single eye*, a soul full of God ! A fair exchange, if by the loss of reputation we can purchase the lowest degree of purity of heart ! We beg my mother and you would not cease to work together with us, that, whatever we lose, we may gain this ; and that having tasted of this good gift, we may count all things else but dung and dross in comparison of it.”

Mr. Wesley now redoubled his diligence with his pupils, that they might recover the ground which they had lost. But as he had been blamed for singularity, both by friends and enemies, and many had thought that he too rigorously imposed some particular practices upon others ; he informed his mother what the singularity was, which chiefly gave offence at Oxford, and explained the methods he used with his pupils, to instruct them in the things of God. This letter is dated August the 17th. “ The thing,” says he, “ that gives offence here is, the being singular with regard to time, expence, and company. This is evident beyond exception, from the case of Mr. Smith, one of our Fellows ; who no sooner began to husband his time, to retrench unnecessary expences, and to avoid his irreligious acquaintance, but he was set upon, by not only all those acquaintance, but many others too, as if he had entered into a conspiracy to cut all their throats : Though to this day he has not advised any single person, unless in a word or two and by accident, to act as he did in any of those instances.

“ It is true indeed, that ‘ the devil hates offensive war most,’ and that whoever tries to rescue more than his own soul from

his hands, will have more enemies, and meet with greater opposition, than if he was content with *having his own life for a prey*. That I try to do this, is likewise certain; but I cannot say whether I ‘rigorously impose any observances on others,’ till I know what that phrase means. What I do, is this: When I am intrusted with a person who is first to understand and practise, and then to teach, the law of Christ, I endeavour by an intermixture of reading and conversation, to shew him what that law is; that is, to renounce all insubordinate love of the world, and to love and obey God with all his strength. When he appears seriously sensible of this, I propose to him the means God hath commanded him to use, in order to that end; and, a week or a month or a year after, as the state of his soul seems to require it, the several prudential means recommended by wise and good men.\* As to the times, order, measure, and manner, wherein these are to be proposed, I depend upon the Holy Spirit to direct me, in and by my own experience and reflection, joined to the advices of my religious friends here and elsewhere. Only two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases: First, to begin, continue, and end all my advices in the spirit of meekness; as knowing that *the wrath or severity of man worketh not the righteousness of God*: and Secondly, to add to meekness long-suffering; in pursuance of a rule which I fixt long since, ‘never to give up any one till I have tried him, at least, ten years;’—how long hath God had pity on thee?

“If the wise and good will believe those falsehoods which the bad invent, because I endeavour to save myself and my friends from them, then I shall lose my reputation, even among them, for (though not perhaps good, yet) the best actions I ever did in my life. This is the very case. I try

\* He did not yet feel the want of living faith, and consequently did not inculcate it upon others. The method described above is Mr. Law’s plan,—or, at least, the best part of it. Mr. Wesley was still toiling in that fire.

to act as my Lord commands: ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them. There is a way, and there is but one, of making my peace; God forbid I should ever take it. I have as many pupils as I need, and as many friends: when more are better for me, I shall have more. If I have no more pupils after these are gone from me, I shall then be glad of a Curacy near you: if I have, I shall take it as a signal that I am to remain here. Whether here or there, my desire is, to know and feel that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing. For whenever I am empty of myself, then know I of a surety, that neither friends nor foes, nor any creature, can hinder me from being '*filled with all the fulness of God.*' Let not my father's, or your prayers, be ever slack in behalf of your affectionate son."

On the 21st of September, 1734, Mr. Wesley began the practice of reading as he travelled on horseback; and this practice he continued for nearly forty years, till his advanced age obliged him to travel in a carriage. His frequent journies, often on foot as well as on horseback, and the great and constant labour of preaching, reading, visiting, &c., wherever he was, with hard study and a very abstemious diet, had now very much affected his health. His strength was greatly reduced, and he had frequent returns of spitting of blood. In the night of the 16th of July, he had a return of it in such quantity as waked him out of sleep. The sudden and unexpected manner of its coming on, with the solemnity of the night season, made eternity seem near. He cried to God, "O! prepare me for thy coming, and come when thou wilt."\* His friends began to be alarmed for his safety, and his mother wrote two or three letters, blaming him for the general neglect of his health. He now took the advice of a physician; and by proper care, and a prudent management of his daily exercise, he gradually recovered his strength.

\* Private Diary.

The whole force of Mr. Wesley's mind was now bent to religious subjects. In reflecting on the progress of the soul towards an entire conformity to the will of God and a fitness for heaven, he observed, that there are certain states of mind which are more strongly marked than others, and that these states ascertain our progress with some degree of certainty.\* He wrote to his mother on this subject. She answered him in a letter of January : " You are entirely in the right in what you say in the second paragraph of your letter. The different degrees of virtue and piety are different states of soul, which must be passed through gradually ;—for, in all matters of religion, if there be not an internal sense in the hearer corresponding to the sense in the mind of the speaker, what is said will have no effect : This I have often experienced ; yet sometimes it falls out, that while a zealous Christian is discoursing on spiritual subjects, the blessed Spirit of God will give such light to the minds of those who hear him, as dispels their native darkness, and enables them to apprehend those spiritual things, of which before they had no discernment."†—In this letter she addresses a pupil of Mr. Wesley's, who appears to have despised religion. " Tell him from me," says she, " I am as good as my word : I daily pray for him ; and beg of him, if he have the least regard for his soul, or have yet any remaining sense of religion in his mind, to shake off all acquaintance with the profane and irregular ; for it is the free-thinker and sensualist, not the despised Methodist, who will be ashamed and confounded when summoned to appear before the face of that Almighty Judge, whose Godhead they

\* Yes ; he might learn from St. John's first Epistle, that there is, first, *being in Christ*, by faith ; secondly, *abiding in him*, by constant faith ; thirdly, *dwelling in him*, by faith made perfect, and working by love. All this he had yet to learn. But he was too full of his own wisdom and righteousness to discern it.

† We see here, both in the mother and the son, an instance of the blind discussing the subject of colours ; but with admirable sense and propriety, considering their want of the true Christian faith.

have blasphemed, and whose offered mercy they despised and ludicrously rejected. The pleasures of sin are but for a short uncertain time; but eternity hath no end. Therefore, one would think, that few arguments might serve to convince a man, who has not lost his senses, that it is of the last importance for us to be very serious in improving the present time, and acquainting ourselves with God while it is called *to-day*; lest, being disqualified for his blissful presence, our future existence be inexpressibly miserable."

The health of Mr. Wesley's father, as it has been stated before, had been declining for several years, and he now seemed approaching towards the close of life. The old gentleman, conscious of his situation, and desirous that the living of Epworth might remain in the family, wrote to his son John, requesting him to apply for the next presentation. We have already seen, that, when the subject was mentioned the year before, he hesitated, and could not determine one way or the other. But he was now determined not to accept of the living, if he could obtain it; and stated to his father some reasons for refusing to comply with his request. His father and his brother Samuel were disappointed; and both attacked him, with every argument they could possibly bring to bear upon him. He acted on the defensive only, and maintained his ground. But the mode of attack, and of his defence, will give us the best view of his principles and disposition of mind at this time.

His father's letter is dated November 20th, and runs as follows: "Your state of the question, and only argument, is, 'The question is not, whether I could do more good to others, *there or here*; but whether I could do more good to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford, than at any other place.'

"To this I answer—1. It is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which

should be our main consideration and direction in any course of life. Witness St. Paul and Moses.

“ 2. Supposing you could be more holy yourself at Oxford, how does it follow, that you could more promote holiness in others, *there* than *elsewhere*? Have you found many instances of it after so many years’ hard pains and labour? Further, I dare say, you are more modest and just than to say, there are no holier men than you at Oxford; and yet it is possible they may not have promoted holiness more than you have done; as I doubt not, but you might have done it much more, had you taken the right method: For, there is a particular turn of mind for these matters; great prudence as well as great fervour.

“ 3. I cannot allow austerities, or fasting, considered by themselves, to be proper acts of holiness, nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life; we are not to bury our talents; we are to let our light shine before men, and that not barely through the chinks of a bushel, for fear the wind should blow it out. The design of lighting it was, that it might give light to all that went into the house of God. And to this, academical studies are only preparatory.

“ 4. You are sensible what figures those make, who stay in the University till they are superannuated. I cannot think drowsiness promotes holiness. How commonly do they drone away their life, either in a College, or in a country parsonage, where they can only give God the snuffs of them, having nothing of life or vigour left to make them useful in the world.

“ 5. We are not to fix our eye on one single point of duty, but to take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. Thus, in the case before us, put all the circumstances together:—If you are not indifferent whether the labours of an aged father, for above forty years in God’s vineyard, be lost, and the fences of it trodden down and destroyed;—if you consider that Mr. M. must, in all probability, succeed me, if you do not;—and that the prospect



of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither shocks my soul, and is in a fair way of bringing down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave;—if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered as soon as I am dropped;—if you reflect on the dear love and longing which this poor people have for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more scholars in the University;—you may perhaps alter your mind, and bend your will to His, who has promised, if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths.”

The old gentleman wrote also to his son Samuel on the subject, who warmly took part with his father, and wrote to his brother at Oxford, in December, 1734. “Yesterday,” says he, “I received a letter from my father, wherein he tells me, you are unalterably resolved not to accept of a certain living if you could get it. After this declaration, I believe no one can move your mind, but Him who made it. I shall not draw the saw of controversy; and, therefore, though I judge every proposition flatly false, except that of your being assured, yet I shall allow every word, and have nevertheless this to say against your conclusions.—1. I see your love to yourself; but your love to your neighbour I do not see.—2. You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it, before God, and his high priest, and his church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to teach, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then, with so vile a reservation, as to purpose in your heart that you never would have any so committed? It is not a College, it is not an University, it is the *order of the Church*, according to which you were called. Let Charles, if he is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary; *you have put your hand to the plough,—to that plough.*”—This is strong language; but would any one

believe, that he had himself declined the living, which his father pressed him to seek some time before this, and not upon such strong grounds,—Mr. S. Wesley only preferring his academical studies and employments? Such, however, was the fact. He chiefly felt for the family, who, he feared, would be put to great inconvenience, if the living were not retained. Mr. John Wesley, however, kept himself within his fortress, and answered his brother Samuel with caution. His letter is dated January 15th, 1735, and having explained himself at some length to his father, he sent a copy of that letter to his brother. He observes, in the remarks which accompany it,

“ Had not my brother Charles desired it might be otherwise, I should have sent you only an extract of the following letter. But, if you will be at the pains, you will soon reduce the argument of it to two or three points; which, if to be answered at all, will be easily answered. By it you may observe, my present purpose is founded on my present weakness. But it is not, indeed, probable, that my father should live till that weakness is removed.

“ Your second argument I had no occasion to mention before. To it I answer, that I do not, nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four cures belonging to our College, and consistent with a Fellowship: I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas. Not that I am clearly assured that I should be false to my engagement, were I only to instruct and exhort the pupils committed to my charge. But of that I should think more.”

Though the letter to his father is long, yet it contains such a distinct view of his manner of thinking and reasoning, and of the energy of his language, at this period, that it cannot, with propriety, be omitted.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ 1st. The authority of a parent, and the call of Providence, are things of so sacred a nature, that a question

in which these are any ways concerned, deserves the most serious consideration. I am, therefore, greatly obliged to you for the pains you have taken to set ours in a clear light ; which I now intend to consider more at large, with the utmost attention of which I am capable. And I shall the more cheerfully do it, as being assured of your joining with me in earnestly imploring His guidance, who will not suffer those that bend their wills to his, to seek death in the error of their life.

“ 2d. I entirely agree, that ‘ the glory of God, and the ‘ different degrees of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life ;’ and, consequently, that it must wholly turn upon this single point, whether I am to prefer a College life, or that of a rector of a parish. I do not say the glory of God is to be my *first*, or my *principal* consideration, but my *only one* ; since all that are not implied in this, are absolutely of no weight : In presence of this, they all vanish away, they are less than the small dust of the balance.

“ 3d. And, indeed, till all other considerations were set aside, I could never come to any clear determination ; till my eye was single, my whole mind was full of darkness. Every consideration distinct from this, threw a shadow over all the objects I had in view, and was such a cloud as no light could penetrate. Whereas, so long as I can keep my eye single, and steadily fixed on the glory of God, I have no more doubt of the way wherein I should go, than of the shining of the sun at noon-day.

“ 4th. That course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others. I say, in ourselves and others, as being fully persuaded that these can never be put asunder. For how is it possible, that the good God should make our interest inconsistent with our neighbour’s, that he should make our being in one state best for ourselves, and our being in another best for the church ? This would be making a strange schism in his

body ; such as surely never was from the beginning of the world. And if not, then whatever state is best on either of these accounts, is so on the other likewise. If it be best for others, then it is so for us ; if for us, then for them.

“ 5th. However, when two ways of life are proposed, I should choose to begin with that part of the question, Which of these have I rational ground to believe will conduce most to my own improvement ? And that, not only because it is every physician’s concern to heal himself first, but because it seems we may judge with more ease, and perhaps certainty too, in which state we can most promote holiness in ourselves, than in which we can in others.

“ 6th. By holiness, I mean, not fasting, or bodily austerity, or any other external means of improvement ; but the inward temper to which all these are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man. And I therefore believe, that, in the state wherein I am, I can most promote this holiness in myself, because I now enjoy several advantages, which are almost peculiar to it.

“ 7th. The first of these, is daily converse with my friends. I know no other place under heaven where I can have always at hand half a dozen persons nearly of my own judgment, and engaged in the same studies ; persons who are awakened into a full and lively conviction, that they have only one work to do upon earth, who are in some measure enlightened so as to see, though at a distance, what that one work is, viz. the recovery of that single intention and pure affection which were in Christ Jesus ; who, in order to this, have, according to their power, renounced themselves, and wholly and absolutely devoted themselves to God ; and who, suitably thereto, deny themselves, and take up their cross daily. To have such a number of such friends constantly watching over my soul, and, according to the variety of occasions, administering

reproof, advice, or exhortation, with all plainness, and all gentleness, is a blessing I have not yet found any Christians to enjoy in any other part of the kingdom. And such a blessing it is, so conducive, if faithfully used, to the increase of all holiness, as I defy any one to know the full value of, till he receives his full measure of glory.

“ 8th. Another invaluable blessing, which I enjoy here in a greater degree than I could any where else, is, retirement. I have not only as much, but as little company as I please. I have no such thing as a trifling visitant, except about an hour in a month, when I invite some of the Fellows to breakfast. Unless at that one time, no one ever takes it into his head to set foot within my door, except he has some business of importance to communicate to me, or I to him. And even then, as soon as he has dispatched his business, he immediately takes his leave.

“ 9th. Both these blessings, the continual presence of *useful*, and uninterrupted freedom from *trifling* acquaintance, are exceedingly endeared to me, whenever I have spent but one week out of this place. The far greatest part of the conversation I meet with abroad, even among those whom I believe to be real Christians, turns on points that are absolutely wide of my purpose, that no way forward me in the business of life. Now, though they may have time to spare, I have none; it is absolutely necessary for such an one as me to follow, with all possible care and vigilance, that excellent advice of Mr. Herbert,—

Still let thy mind be bent, still plotting where,  
And when, and how, the business may be done.

And this, I bless God, I can in some measure do, so long as I avoid that bane of piety, the company of *good sort of men*, lukewarm Christians, (as they are called,) persons that have a great concern for, but no sense of, religion. But these undermine insensibly all my resolutions, and quite steal from

me the little fervour I have; and I never come from among these *Saints of the world*, (as J. Valdesso calls them,) faint, dissipated, and shorn of all my strength, but I say, ‘God deliver me from a half Christian!’

“10th. Freedom from care, I take to be the next greatest advantage to freedom from useless, and therefore hurtful, company. And this, too, I enjoy in greater perfection here, than I can ever expect to do any where else. I hear of such a thing as *the cares of this world*, and I read of them, but I know them not. My income is ready for me on so many stated days; and all I have to do, is, to count and carry it home. The grand article of my expence is food, and this, too, is provided without any care of mine. I have nothing to do, but at such an hour to take and eat what is prepared for me. My laundress, barber, &c. are always ready at quarter-day, so I have no trouble on account of those expences. And for what I occasionally need, I can be supplied from time to time without any expence of thought. Now, to convince me what a help to holiness this is, (were not my experience abundantly sufficient,) I should need no better authority than St. Paul’s: ‘*I would have you be without carefulness. This I speak for your own profit, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. Happy is he that careth only for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.*’ He may be holy both in body and spirit, after the Apostle’s judgment; and I think that he had the Spirit of God.

“11th. To quicken me in making a thankful and diligent use of all the other advantages of this place, I have the opportunity of public prayer twice a day, and of weekly communicating. It would be easy to mention many more, and likewise to shew many disadvantages, which a person of greater courage and skill than me, could scarce separate from a country life. But whatever one of experience and resolution might do, I am very sensible I should not be able to turn aside one of the thousand temptations that would immediately

rush upon me. I could not stand my ground, no not for one month, against intemperance in sleeping, eating, and drinking; against irregularity in study; against a general lukewarmness in my affections, and remissness in my actions; against softness and self-indulgence, directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ. And then, when my spirit was thus dissolved, I should be an easy prey to whatever impertinent company came in my way. Then would the cares of the world, and the desire of other things, roll back with a full tide upon me. It would be no wonder, if, *while I preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away*. I cannot therefore but observe, that the question does not relate barely to degrees of perfection, but to the very essence and being of it. *Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni*.\* The point is, whether I shall, or shall not, work out my salvation, whether I shall serve Christ or Belial.

“12th. What still heightens my fear of this untried state, is, that when I am once entered into it, be the inconveniences of it found more or less—*vestigia nulla retrorsum*—‘when I am there, there I must stay.’ If this way of life should ever prove less advantageous, I have almost continual opportunities of quitting it; but whatever difficulties occur in that, whether foreseen or unforeseen, there is no returning, any more than from the grave. When I have once launched out into that unknown sea, there is no recovering my harbour; I must on, among whatever whirlpools, or rocks, or sands, though all the waves and storms go over me.

“13th. Thus much as to myself. But you justly observe, that we are not to consider ourselves alone; since God made us all for a social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory. I allow, too, that he will take an exact account of every talent; which he has lent us, not to bury them, but

\* .. My life, my blood is at stake !”

to employ every mite we have received, in diffusing holiness all around us. I cannot deny, that every follower of Christ is, in his proportion, the light of the world; but whoever is such can no more be concealed than the sun in the midst of heaven; that, being set as a light in a dark place, his shining out must be the more conspicuous; that, to this very end was his light given, that it might shine at least to all that look towards him; and, indeed, that there is one only way of hiding it, which is, to put it out. Neither can I deny, that it is the indispensable duty of every Christian to impart both light and heat to all who are willing to receive it. I am obliged likewise, unless I lie against the truth, to grant, that there is not so contemptible an animal upon earth, as one that drones away life, without ever labouring to promote the glory of God, and the good of men; and that, whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, in a college or out of it. Yet, granting the superlative degree of contempt to be on all accounts due to a college-drone; a wretch that hath received ten talents, and yet employs none; that is not only promised a reward by his gracious Master, but is paid beforehand for his work by his generous Founder, and yet works not at all; allowing all this, and whatever else can be said, (for I own it is impossible to say enough,) against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury of those who are commonly called harmless or good sort of men, (a fair proportion of whom, I must to our shame confess, are to be found in colleges,) allowing this, I say, I do not apprehend it will conclude against a college-life in general. For the abuse of it does not destroy the use: Though there are some here who are the lumber of the creation, it does not follow, that others may not be of more service to the world in this station, than they could in any other.

“14th. That I in particular could, might, it seems, be inferred from what has been proved already, viz. That I could be holier here myself than any where else, if I faithfully



used the blessings I enjoy ; for to prove, that the holier any man is himself, the more shall he promote holiness in others, there needs no more than this one *postulatum*, ‘The help which ‘is done on earth, God does it himself.’ If so, if God be the sole agent in healing souls, and man only the instrument in his hand, there can no doubt be made, but that the more holy a man is, he will make use of him the more : Because he is more willing to be so used ; because the more pure he is, he is the fitter instrument for the God of purity ; because he will pray more, and more earnestly, that he may be employed, and that his service may tend to his Master’s glory ; because all his prayers, both for employment, and success therein, will the more surely pierce the clouds ; because the more his heart is enlarged, the wider sphere he may act in without carefulness or distraction ; and, lastly, because the more his heart is renewed in the image of God, the more God can renew it in others by him, without destroying him by pride or vanity.

“ 15<sup>th</sup>. But for the proof of every one of these weighty truths, experience is worth a thousand reasons. I see, I feel them every day. Sometimes I cannot do good to others, because I am unwilling to do it ; shame or pain is in the way ; and I do not desire to serve God at so dear a rate. Sometimes I cannot do the good I desire to do, because I am in other respects too unholy. I know within myself, were I fit to be so employed, God would employ me in this work. But my heart is too unclean for such mighty works to be wrought by my hands. Sometimes I cannot accomplish the good I am employed in, because I do not pray more, and more fervently ; and sometimes even when I do pray, and that instantly, because I am not worthy that my prayer should be heard. Sometimes I dare not attempt to assist my neighbour, because I know the narrowness of my heart, that it cannot attend to many things, without utter confusion, and dissipation

of thought. And a thousand times have I been mercifully withheld from success in the things I have attempted ; because were one so proud and vain enabled to gain others, he would lose his own soul.

“ 16th. From all this I conclude, that where I am most holy myself, there I could most promote holiness in others ; and, consequently, that I could more promote it here, than in any place under heaven. But I have likewise other reasons besides this to think so ; and the first is, the plenteousness of the harvest. Here is indeed a large scene of various action. Here is room for charity in all its forms. There is scarce any way of doing good to our fellow-creatures, for which here is not daily occasion. I can now only touch upon the several heads. Here are poor families to be relieved ; here are children to be educated ; here are work-houses, wherein both young and old want, and gladly receive, the word of exhortation ; here are prisons to be visited, wherein alone is a complication of all human wants ; and, lastly, here are the schools of the prophets ; here are tender minds to be formed and strengthened, and babes in Christ to be instructed, and perfected in all useful learning. Of these in particular we must observe, that he who gains only one, does thereby as much service to the world as he could do in a parish in his whole life, for his name is *Legion* ; in him are contained all those who shall be converted by him. He is not a single drop of the dew of heaven ; but ‘ *a river to make glad the city of God.*’

“ 17th. But Epworth is yet a larger sphere of action than this ; there I should have the care of two thousand souls. Two thousand souls ! I see not how any man living can take care of an hundred.\* At least, I could not ; I know too well *quid valcant humeri*.† Because the weight I have already

\* How greatly did God enlarge his heart, as well as his labours, in process of time !

† How much I can bear.

upon me, is almost more than I am able to bear, ought I to increase it ten-fold?

—————Imponere Pelio Ossam  
Scilicet, atque Osse frondosum involvere Olympum?‡

Would this be the way to help either myself or my brethren up to heaven? Nay, but the mountains I reared would only crush my own soul, and so make me utterly useless to others.

“18th. I need not but just glance upon several other reasons, why I am more likely to be useful here than any where else. As, Because I have the joint advice of many friends in any difficulty, and their joint encouragement in any dangers: Because the good Bishop and Vice-Chancellor, are at hand to supply (as need is) their want of experience: Because we have the eyes of multitudes upon us, who, even without designing it, perform the most substantial office of friendship, apprising us where we have already fallen, and guarding us from falling again: Lastly, Because we have here a constant fund, (which I believe this year will amount to near eighty pounds,) to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby prepare their souls to receive instruction.

“19th. If it be said, that the love of the people at Epworth balances all these advantages here; I ask, how long it will last? Only till I come to tell them plainly, that their deeds are evil, and, to make a particular application of that general sentence, to say to each, ‘*Thou art the man!*’ Alas, Sir, do I not know, what love they had for you at first? And how have they used you since? Why, just as every one will be used, whose business it is to bring light to them that love to sit in darkness.

“20th. Notwithstanding, therefore, their present prejudice in my favour, I cannot quit my first conclusion, that I am

‡ To heap mountains upon mountains, like the fabled giants, in order to scale Heaven.

not likely to do that good any where, not even at Epworth, which I may do at Oxford. And yet one terrible objection lies in the way : ‘Have you found it so in fact ? What have you ‘done there in so many years ? Nay, have not the very attempts ‘to do good, for want either of a particular turn of mind for ‘the business you engaged in, or of prudence to direct you in ‘the right method of doing it, not only been unsuccessful, but ‘brought such contempt upon you, as has in great measure ‘disqualified you for any future success ? And are there not ‘men in Oxford who are not only better and holier than you, ‘but who have preserved their reputation, who, being universally esteemed, are every way fitter to promote the glory of ‘God in that place ?’

“ 21st. I am not careful to answer in this matter. It is not my part to say whether God has done any good by my hands ; whether I have a particular turn of mind for this or not ; or whether the want of success, in my past attempts, was owing to want of prudence, to ignorance of the right method of acting, or to some other cause. But the latter part of the objection, ‘that he who is despised can do no good, that without reputation a man cannot be useful in the world,’ being the strong-hold of all the unbelieving, the vain-glorious, and the cowardly Christians, (so called,) I will, by the grace of God, see what reason that has, thus continually, to exalt itself against the knowledge of Christ.

“ 22d. With regard to contempt then, (under which term I include all the passions that border upon it, as hatred, envy, &c., and all the fruits that flow from them, such as calumny, reproach, and persecution in any of its forms,) my first position, in defiance of worldly wisdom, is this, ‘Every true ‘Christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not ‘so, and who know him to be such, i. e. in effect, by all with ‘whom he converses ; since it is impossible for light not to ‘shine.’ This position I prove, both from the example of our Lord, and from his express assertions. FIRST. From his exam-

ple: If the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord, then, as our Master was despised and rejected of men, so will every one of his true disciples. But the disciple is not above his Master, and therefore the consequence will not fail him a hair's-breadth. **SECONDLY.** From his own express assertions of this consequence. '*If they have called the master of the house BEELZEBUB, how much more them of his household?*' Matthew x, 25. '*Remember (ye that would fain forget, or evade it) the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*' And as for that vain hope, that this belongs only to the first followers of Christ, hear ye him! '*All these things will they do to you, because they know not Him that sent me.*' And again, '*Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*' John xvi, 20. Both the persons who are hated, and the persons who hate them, and the cause of their hating them, are here clearly determined. The *hated* are all that are not of this world, that are born again in the knowledge and love of God; the *haters* are all that are of this world, that know not God, so as to *love* him with all their strength; the cause of their hatred is, the entire irreconcilable differences between their desires, judgments, and affections; because these know not God, and those are determined to know and pursue nothing besides Him; because these esteem and love the world, and those count it dung and dross, and singly desire that love of Christ.

"23d. My next position is this, 'Until he be thus condemned, no man is in a state of salvation.' And this is no more than a plain inference from the former; for if all that are not of the world are therefore condemned by those that are, then, till a man is so condemned, he is of the world, i. e. out of a state of salvation. Nor is it possible for all the trimmers between God and the world, for all the dodgers in religion, to elude this consequence, which God has established, and not man, unless they could prove that a man may be of the world,

i. e. void both of the knowledge and love of God, and yet be in a state of salvation. I must therefore, with or without leave of these, keep close to my Saviour's judgment, and maintain, that contempt is a part of that cross which every man must bear if he will follow him; that it is the badge of his discipleship, the stamp of his profession, the constant seal of his calling; insomuch that, though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved without being despised.

“ 24th. I should not spend any more words about this great truth, but that it seems at present quite voted out of the world; the masters in Israel, learned men, men of renown, seem absolutely to have forgotten it; nay, censure those who have not forgotten the words of their Lord, as setters forth of strange doctrines. And hence it is commonly asked, ‘*How can these things be?*’ How can contempt be necessary to salvation? I answer,—as it is a necessary means of purifying souls for heaven; as it is a blessed instrument of cleansing them from pride, which else would turn their very graces into poison; as it is a glorious antidote against vanity, which would otherwise pollute and destroy all their labours; as it is an excellent medicine to heal the anger and impatience of spirit, apt to insinuate into their best employments; and, in a word, as it is one of the choicest remedies in the whole magazine of God against love of the world, in which whosoever liveth is counted dead before him.

“ 25th. And hence (as a full answer to the preceding objection) I infer one position more. ‘That our being contemned is absolutely necessary to our doing good in the world.’ If not to our doing some good, (for God may work by Judas,) yet to our doing so much as we otherwise should. For since God will employ those instruments most, who are fittest to be employed; since the holier a man is, the fitter instrument he is for the God of holiness; and since contempt is so glorious a means of advancing holiness in him that is exercised thereby;

nay, since no man can be holy at all without it;—who can keep off the consequence, that the being contemned is absolutely necessary to a Christian's doing his full measure of good in the world? *'Where then is the Scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world?'* Where is the replier against God, with his sage maxims? *'He that is despised can do no good in the world; to be useful, a man must be esteemed; to advance the glory of God, you must have a fair reputation.'* Saith the world so? But what saith the Scripture? Why, that God hath laughed all this Heathen wisdom to scorn. It saith, that twelve despised followers of a despised Master, all of whom were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the filth and off-scouring of the world, did more good in it than all the tribes of Israel. It saith, that the despised Master of these despised followers left a standing direction to us, and to our children, *'Blessed are ye, (not accursed with the heavy curse of doing no good, of being useless in the world,) when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'*

“26th. These are part of my reasons for choosing to abide (till I am better informed) in the station wherein God has placed me. As for the flock committed to your care, whom for many years you have diligently fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in God your labour shall not be in vain, either to yourself or them. Many of them the Great Shepherd has by your hand delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom are already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And he that took care of the poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead.”

Mr. Wesley having sent a copy of this letter to his brother Samuel, he replied to it, February 8, 1735. He tells him, "Charles was in the right, to desire I might have your whole letter: Though you have stated the point, so as to take away the question, at least all possibility of differing about it, if it be only this, whether you are to serve Christ, or Belial? I see no end of writing now, but merely complying with your desire of having my thoughts upon it; which I here give in short, and I think almost in full, though I pass over strictures on less matters.

"1. Your friends, retirement, frequent ordinances, and freedom from care, are great blessings. All, except the last, you may expect in a lower degree, elsewhere. Sure, all your labours are not come to this, that more is absolutely necessary for you, for the very being of *your* Christian life, than for the salvation of all the parish-priests in England. It is very strange!

"2. To the question, 'What good have you done at Oxford?', you are not careful to answer: How comes it then you are so very careful about the good you might do at Epworth? *The help that is done on earth, He doth it himself*, is a full solution of that terrible difficulty.

"3. The impossibility of return, the certainty of being disliked by them that now cry you up, and the small comparative good my father has done, are good prudential reasons; but, I think, can hardly extend to conscience. 'You can leave Oxford when you will:' Not surely to such advantage. 'You have a probability of doing good there:' Will that good be wholly undone if you leave it? Why should you not leaven another lump?

"4. What you say of contempt is nothing to the purpose; for if you will go to Epworth, I will answer for it, you shall, in a competent time, be despised as much as your heart can wish. In your doctrine, you argue from a particular to a general. 'To be useful, a man must be esteemed,' is as cer-



tain as any proposition in Euclid ; and I defy all mankind to produce one instance of directly doing spiritual good without it, in the whole book of God. \*

“ 5. ‘ God, who provided for the flock before, will do it after, my father.’ May He not suffer them to be, what they once were, almost heathens ? And may not that be prevented by your ministry ? It could never enter into my head, that you could refuse on any other ground, than a general resolution against the cure of souls. I shall give no positive reason for it, till my first is *answered*. The order of the Church stakes you down, and, the more you struggle, will hold the faster. If there be such a thing as truth, I insist upon it you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it : *Utrum mavis ?*”†

To this letter Mr. John Wesley replied on the 13th of the same month. “ Neither you nor I,” says he, “ have any time to spare : so I must be as short as I can.

“ There are two questions between us, one relating to being good, the other to doing good. With regard to the former : 1. You allow, I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and Divine ordinances, than I could do elsewhere ; and I add, (1) I feel all this to be but just enough. (2) I have always found less than this to be too little for me ; and therefore, (3) Whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation.

“ 2. As to the latter, I am not careful to answer, ‘ What good I have done at Oxford ;’ because I cannot think of it without the utmost danger. I am careful what good I may do at Epworth, (1) Because I can think of it without any danger at all ; (2) Because I cannot, as matters now stand, avoid thinking of it without sin.

\* This is true in part. A minister of Christ will, yea must, be esteemed by those who receive ‘ *the truth in the love of it*,’ by his instrumentality. But it is as certain, that he will be despised by those who do not so receive it.

† Which do you prefer ?

“3. Another can supply my place at Epworth, better than at Oxford; and the good done here, is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain, than to do the same to particular streams.

“4. To the objection, ‘You are despised at Oxford, therefore you can do no good there;’ I answer, (1) A Christian will be despised any where.—(2) No one is a Christian till he is despised.—(3) His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow, that every one to whom you do good directly, must esteem you, first or last.—N. B. A man may despise you for one thing, hate you for another, and envy you for a third.

“5. ‘God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before.’ But *I may not* attempt to prevent it, with so great hazard to my own soul. Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi*,\* or implies these two propositions: ‘(1) You resolve against any parochial cure of souls.—(2) The Priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers, is perjured.’—Let us add a third: ‘The Tutor who, being in Orders, never accepts of a parish, is perjured;’ and then I deny all three.”

This letter Mr. Samuel Wesley answered thus, paragraph by paragraph.—“1. You say, you have but just enough. Had ever any man on earth more?—‘You have experienced less to be insufficient.’ Not in the course of the priesthood to which you are called. In that way, I am persuaded, though ‘*he that gathereth much can have nothing over,*’ yet ‘*he that gathereth little, can have no lack.*’—2. ‘There is danger in thinking of the good you have done, but not of what you may do.’ Vain-glory lies both ways:—‘But the latter was your duty.’ So was the former; without you can compare two things without thinking of one them.—3. ‘The good done at Oxford is more diffusive.’ It is not *that good* you have

\* Mistaking the question.

promised. You deceive yourself, if you imagine you do not here think of *what you have done*.—‘Your want may be better supplied at Epworth;’ not if my father is right in his successions.—(4) ‘A Christian will be despised every where; no one is a Christian till he is so; it will further his doing good.’ If universal propositions, I deny them all. Esteem goes before the good done, as well as follows it.—‘A man may both despise and envy.’ True; he may have a hot and a cold fit of an ague. Contempt in general, is no more incompatible with, than necessary to, benefiting others.—(5) See the first and third.—(6) I said plainly, I thought you had made a general resolution: As to taking the first offer, I supposed an opportunity a proper one; and declare now my judgment, should you live never so long, in the ordinary course of Providence, you can never meet another *so proper*.—‘An ordained Tutor, who accepts not a cure, is perjured;’ alter the term into, ‘Who resolves not to accept;’ and I will maintain it, unless you prove either of these two: (i.) ‘There is no such obligation at taking Orders.’ (ii.) ‘This obligation is dispensed with.’ Both which I utterly deny.”

Mr. John Wesley now thought it time to close the debate. His letter is dated the 4th of March. He observes to his brother, “I had rather dispute with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expence of time and words. The question is now brought to one point, and the whole argument will lie in one single syllogism. ‘Neither hope of doing greater good, nor fear of any evil, ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to do: But you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish: Therefore, neither that hope nor that fear ought to deter you from it.’ The only doubt which remains is, whether I have so engaged myself, or not? You think I did at my ordination, ‘before God and his High Priest.’ I think, I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took; it being certain, and allowed by all,

‘ *Verbis, in quæ quis jurejurando adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationi Sacramenti modum ac mensuram, præstitui a mente non præstantis sed exigentis juramentum.*—That the true sense of the words of an oath, and the mode and extent of its obligation, are not to be determined by him who takes it, but by him who requires it.’ Therefore it is not I, but the High Priest of God, before whom I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it.

“ Accordingly, the post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him, proposing this single question to him, Whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words: ‘ It doth not seem to me, that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his church in your present or some other station.’—Now that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence.”

The late Dr. Priestley, upon a view of Mr. John Wesley’s refusal to apply for the living of Epworth, and of his invincible resolution in every thing which appeared to him to concern religion, has declared, “ he wanted only *rational principles* of religion, to be one of the first of human character.” Had he had *only* what the Doctor calls *rational principles of religion*, he might have gone the usual rounds of parochial duty at Epworth, and, it may be, might have succeeded to what is termed a *better living*. But, however he might in that case have been admired as a scholar and a man, he certainly never would have been ranked with the Reformers or Apostles; nor would the present, not to say “future generations, rise up,” as the Doctor says they will, “and call him blessed.”

### CHAPTER III.

MR. WESLEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA, IN WHICH HE WAS  
ACCOMPANIED BY HIS BROTHER CHARLES.

IN the midst of the debate described in the last Chapter, Mr. Wesley wrote to his mother, without taking the least notice of it; nor do I find that she wrote to him on that subject. She had approved of her eldest son's refusal to apply for the living, as we shall see hereafter, and could not therefore join in pressing it on her second son. His letter is on the subject of Christian Liberty, concerning which he wished to have his mother's opinion. He says, "I have had a great deal of conversation lately on the subject of Christian Liberty, and should be glad of your thoughts, as to the several notions of it which good men entertain. I perceive different persons take it in at least six different senses.—(1) For liberty from wilful sin, in opposition to the bondage of natural corruption.—(2) For liberty as to rites and points of discipline. So Mr. Whiston says, 'Though the *stations* were instituted by the Apostles, yet 'the liberty of the Christian law dispenses with them on extraordinary occasions.'—(3) For liberty from denying ourselves in little things; for trifles, it is commonly thought, we may indulge in safely, because Christ has made us free. This notion, I a little doubt, is not sound.—(4) For liberty from fear, or a filial freedom from fear on account of his past sins; for he believes in Christ, and hope frees him from fear of losing his present labour, or of being a cast-away hereafter.—(5) Christian Liberty is taken by some, for a freedom from restraint, as to sleep or food. So they would say, your drinking but one glass of wine, or my rising at a fixed hour, was contrary to Christian Liberty.—Lastly, it is taken for freedom

from rules: If by this be meant, making our rules yield to extraordinary occasions, well; if the having no rules at all, this liberty is as yet too high for me; I cannot attain unto it."

Mr. Wesley had now separated himself from all the world, and of course was intent on "*the wisdom from above*." His speculations are remarkable for brevity, order, and clearness,—a consequence of that "*single eye*" which he possessed. But the promise made to all such enquirers, was not yet fulfilled in the evangelical sense. He did not yet feel his need of it, but was making the best use of the old stock. Christian Liberty has been much treated of, and often by those who were ignorant of its whole nature. In the last century, a Jesuit wrote largely upon it, professing to solve doubts, and give relief to afflicted consciences. The whole of his discourse may be judged of by one particular: If any person doubted whether any action amounted to mortal sin, and his Confessor could not give him satisfaction, he was to consult four Doctors of Divinity. If they should agree, that it did not amount thereto, he might dismiss all fear! A witty writer replied, and entitled his answer, "The Art of Chicanery with respect to God;"—that is, the art of outwitting God! Mr. Wesley was happily free from those *depths of Satan*: but he was not yet competent to discuss the subject of Christian Liberty: For (1) He was not then *justified*,—consequently not free from the guilt of sin. He could not therefore judge of the "*glorious liberty of the children of God*," which he ably stated afterwards in several of his sermons.—(2) He had no clear conception of that "*unction of the Holy One*," whereby we are to "*know all things*" necessary for our walk with God.—"*Walk in the Spirit*,"—and "*Walk in the light, as He is in the light*," were precepts as yet too high for him. He had not passed the "*strait gate*," and could scarcely estimate the privileges of the "*narrow way*." But the day of liberty drew near,—liberty from the guilt, the power, and the nature of sin; liberty to do the whole will of Him that

called him, without the shackles of unnecessary scruples, or unprofitable reasonings.

Mr. Wesley's father died in April, 1735, and the living of Epworth was given away in May ; so that he now considered himself as settled at Oxford, without any risk of being further molested in his quiet retreat. But a new scene of action was soon proposed to him, of which he had not before the least conception. The trustees of the new colony of Georgia were greatly in want of proper persons to send thither, to preach the Gospel, not only to the colony, but to the Indians. They fixed their eyes upon Mr. John Wesley and some of his friends, as the most proper persons, on account of the regularity of their behaviour, their abstemious way of living, and their readiness to endure hardships. On the 28th of August, being in London, he met with his friend Dr. Burton, for whom he had a great esteem ; and the next day was introduced to Mr. Oglethorpe, where the matter was proposed to him, and strongly urged upon him by such arguments as they thought most likely to dispose his mind to accept of the proposal. It does not appear, that Mr. Wesley gave them any positive answer. He thought it best to take the opinion of his friends. Accordingly he wrote to his brother Samuel, visited Mr. Law, and, in three or four days, set out for Manchester, to consult Mr. Clayton, Mr. Byrom, and several others whose judgment he respected. From thence he went to Epworth, and laid the matter before his mother. Her answer, as he related it to me, was worthy of the mother and the son : " Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His eldest sister also consented to his acceptance of the proposal. His brother Samuel did the same. Mr. Wesley still hesitated ; and on the 8th of September, Dr. Burton wrote to him, pressing him to a compliance. His letter is directed to Manchester, and franked by Mr. Oglethorpe.

*“ September 8, 1735. C. C. C. Oxon.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I had it in commission to wait upon you at Oxford, whither by this time I imagined you might be arrived. Your short conference with Mr. Oglethorpe has raised the hopes of many good persons, that you and yours would join in an undertaking, which cannot be better executed than by such instruments. I have thought again of the matter, and upon the result of the whole, cannot help again recommending the undertaking to your choice: and the more so, since in our inquiries, there appears such an unfitness in the generality of people. That state of ease, luxury, levity, and inadvertency, observable in most of the plausible and popular Doctors, are disqualifications in a Christian teacher, and would lead us to look for a different set of people. The more men are inured to contempt of ornaments and conveniences of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they are for a state which more properly represents our Christian pilgrimage. And if, upon consideration of the matter, you think yourselves (as you must do, at least amidst such a scarcity of proper persons) the fit instruments for so good a work, you will be ready to embrace this opportunity of doing good; which is not in vain offered to you.—Be pleased to write a line signifying your thoughts to me, or Mr. Oglethorpe; and if by advice I can be assisting to you, you may command my best, best services.

“ Yours, affectionately,

“ JOHN BURTON.

“ P. S. Mr. Horn telling me, he heard you were at Manchester, I presume you are with Mr. Clayton, deliberating about this affair.”

Mr. Wesley now consented to go to Georgia, and Dr. Burton wrote to him again on the 18th of the same month, as follows: “ It was with no small pleasure, that I heard your



resolution on the point under consideration. I am persuaded, that an opportunity is offered of doing much good in an affair, for the conducting of which we can find but few proper instruments. Your undertaking adds greater credit to our proceedings; and the propagation of religion will be the distinguishing honour of our colony. This has ever, in like cases, been the *desideratum*: a defect seemingly lamented, but scarce ever remedied. With greater satisfaction, therefore, we enjoy your readiness to undertake the work. When it is known that good men are thus employed, the pious and charitable will be the more encouraged to promote the work. You have too much steadiness of mind, to be disturbed by the light scoffs of the idle and profane. Let me put a matter to be considered by your brother Charles. Would it not be more advisable that he were in Orders?"

On the 28th of the same month, a few days before Mr. Oglethorpe intended to sail, Dr. Burton wrote again to Mr. Wesley, giving him advice on several points respecting his future situation. Amongst other things he observes,—“Under the influence of Mr. Oglethorpe, giving weight to your endeavours, much may be effected under the present circumstances. The apostolical manner of preaching from house to house, will, through God’s grace, be effectual to turn many to righteousness. The people are babes in the progress of their Christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat; and the wise householder will bring, out of his stores, food proportioned to the necessities of his family. The circumstances of your present Christian pilgrimage will furnish the most affecting subjects of discourse; and what arises *pro re natâ*, will have greater influence than a laboured discourse on a subject in which men think themselves not so immediately concerned. With regard to your behaviour and manner of address, that must be determined according to the different circumstances of persons, &c. But you will always, in the use of means, consider the great end, and therefore your

applications will of course vary. You will keep in view the pattern of that Gospel-preacher St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might gain some. Here is a nice trial of Christian prudence: Accordingly, in every case you would distinguish between what is essential, and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable, and what is variable; between what is of Divine, and what is of human authority. I mention this, because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases, and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on, with more rigour than the commandments of God, to which they are subordinate. Singularities of less importance are often espoused with more zeal, than the weighty matters of God's law. As in all points we love ourselves, so especially in our hypotheses. Where a man has, as it were, a property in a notion, he is most industrious to improve it, and that in proportion to the labour of thought he has bestowed upon it; and as its value rises in imagination, we are in proportion more unwilling to give it up, and dwell upon it more pertinaciously, than upon considerations of general necessity and use. This is a flattering mistake, against which we should guard ourselves. I hope to see you at Gravesend, if possible. I write in haste what occurs to my thoughts:—*disce, docendus adhuc, quæ censet amicus*.\* May God prosper your endeavours for the propagation of his Gospel!"

Mr. Charles Wesley at this time resided at Oxford, and when his brother consented to Dr. Burton's proposal, he also declared his willingness to accompany him in this new and untried path, which promised nothing except what they ardently desired,—a more compleat deliverance from the world. This design, respecting Charles, his brother Samuel vehemently opposed, but in vain. Mr. Charles engaged himself as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also as secretary for

\* "Yet hear what thy unskilful friend can say." CREECH.

Indian affairs. A little before they left England, Dr. Burton suggested, as the reader will have seen, that it might be well if Mr. Charles Wesley were also ordained before he left this country. Mr. John Wesley over-ruled his brother's inclination in this thing also, and he was ordained Deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford ; and the Sunday following, Priest, by Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London.\*

Mr. Wesley now prepared for his voyage to America. While he was abroad, Mr. Gambold, who had been intimately acquainted with him at Oxford, wrote some account of his proceedings there, and endeavoured to delineate his character. He sent it to one of Mr. Wesley's relations ; and I shall conclude this chapter with the following abstract from it. It properly closes the account of the academical career of the two brothers.

“ About the middle of March 1730, I became acquainted with Mr. Charles Wesley, of Christ Church. I had been for two years before in deep melancholy ;—so it pleased God to disappoint and break a proud spirit, and to embitter the world to me as I was inclining to relish its vanities. During this time, I had no friend to whom I could open my mind ; no man did care for my soul, or none at least understood her paths. The learned endeavoured to give me right notions, and the friendly to divert me. One day an old acquaintance entertained me with some reflections on the whimsical Mr. Charles Wesley ; his preciseness, and pious extravagancies. Upon hearing this, I suspected he might be a good Christian. I therefore went to his room, and without ceremony desired the benefit of his conversation. I had so large a share of it afterwards, that hardly a day passed, while I was at College, but we were together once, if not oftener.

\* Mr. C. Wesley's letter to Dr. Chandler.

† After some years, Mr. Gambold left the Church of England, joined the Moravians, merely, as he has stated, for the benefit of retirement and Christian friendship, and became one of their bishops.

“ After some time, he introduced me to his brother John, of Lincoln College: ‘ For he is somewhat older,’ said he, ‘ than I am, and can resolve your doubts better.’ I never observed any person have a more real deference for another, than he had for his brother ; which is the more remarkable, because such near relations, being equals by birth, and conscious to each other of all the little familiar passages of their lives, commonly stand too close, to see the ground there may be for such submission. Indeed he followed his brother entirely ; could I describe one of them, I should describe both. I shall therefore say no more of Charles, but that he was a man formed for friendship ; who by his cheerfulness and vivacity would refresh his friend’s heart : With attentive consideration, he would enter into, and settle all his concerns as far as he was able : He would do any thing for him, great or small, and, by a habit of mutual openness and freedom, would leave no room for misunderstanding.

“ The Wesleys were already talked of for some religious practices, which were first occasioned by Mr. Morgan, of Christ Church. He was a young man of an excellent disposition. He took all opportunities to make his companions in love with a good life ; to create in them a reverence for the public worship ; to tell them of their faults with a sweetness and simplicity that disarmed the worst tempers. He delighted much in works of charity ; he kept several children at school ; and, when he found beggars in the street, would bring them into his chambers, and talk to them. From these combined friends began a little society. Mr. John Wesley was the chief manager, for which he was very fit ; for he had not only more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any, were sure to alarm them, because he was so much in earnest ; nor could they afterwards slight them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform

vigour, was, the care he took to consider well every affair before he engaged in it ; making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humour, or self-confidence. For though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on his humility and singleness of heart. He had, I think, something of authority in his countenance, yet he never assumed any thing to himself above his companions ; any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his words were by them.

“ Their undertaking included these several particulars : To converse with young students ; to visit the prisons ; to instruct some poor families ; to take care of a school and a parish work-house. They took great pains with the younger members of the University, to rescue them from bad company, and encourage them in a sober studious life. They would get them to breakfast, and over a dish of tea endeavour to fasten some good hint upon them. They would bring them acquainted with other well-disposed young men, give them assistance in the difficult parts of their learning, and watch over them with the greatest tenderness.

“ Some or other of them went to the Castle every day, and another most commonly to Bocardo. Whoever went to the Castle, was to read in the chapel to as many prisoners as would attend, and to talk apart to the man or men whom he had taken particularly in charge. When a new prisoner came, their conversation with him for four or five times was close and searching.—If any one was under sentence of death, or appeared to have some intentions of a new life, they came every day to his assistance, and partook in the conflict and suspense of those who should now be found able, or not able, to lay hold on salvation. In order to release those who were confined for small debts, and to purchase books and other necessities, they raised a little fund, to which many of their acquaintance contributed quarterly. They had prayers at

the Castle most Wednesdays and Fridays, a sermon on Sunday, and the sacrament once a month.

“When they undertook any poor family, they saw them at least once a week; sometimes gave them money, admonished them of their vices, read to them, and examined their children. The school was, I think, of Mr. Wesley’s own setting up; however, he paid the mistress, and clothed some, if not all the children. When they went thither, they inquired how each child behaved, saw their work, heard them read and say their prayers, or catechism, and explained part of it. In the same manner they taught the children in the workhouse, and read to the old people as they did to the prisoners.

“They seldom took any notice of the accusations brought against them for their charitable employments; but if they did make any reply, it was commonly such a plain and simple one, as if there was nothing more in the case, but that they had just heard such doctrines of their Saviour, and had believed and done accordingly. Sometimes they would ask such questions as the following: ‘Shall we be more happy in another life, the more virtuous we are in this? Are we the more virtuous, the more intensely we love God and man? Is love, of all habits, the more intense, the more we exercise it? Is either helping, or trying to help, man for God’s sake, an exercise of love to God or man? Particularly, is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, or prisoners, an exercise of love to God or man? Is endeavouring to teach the ignorant, to admonish sinners, to encourage the good, to comfort the afflicted, and reconcile enemies, an exercise of love to God or man? Shall we be more happy in another life, if we do the former of these things, and try to do the latter; or if we do not the one, nor try to do the other?’

“I could say a great deal of his private piety; how it was nourished by a continual recourse to God; and preserved by a strict watchfulness in beating down pride, and reducing th.

craftiness and impetuosity of nature to a child-like simplicity ; and in a good degree crowned with Divine love, and victory over the whole set of earthly passions. He thought prayer to be more his business than any thing else ; and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining ; it discovered what he had been doing, and gave me double hope of receiving wise directions, in the matter about which I came to consult him. In all his motions, he attended to the will of God. He had neither the presumption, nor the leisure, to anticipate things whose season was not now ; and would shew some uneasiness whenever any of us, by impertinent speculations, were shifting off the appointed improvement of the present minute. By being always cheerful, but never triumphing, he so husbanded the secret consolations which God gave him, that they seldom left him, and never but in a state of strong and long-suffering faith. Thus, the repose and satisfaction of the mind being otherwise secured, there were in him no idle cravings, no chagrin or fickleness of spirit, nothing but the genuine wants of the body to be relieved by outward accommodations and refreshments. When he was just come home from a long journey, and had been in different companies, he resumed his usual employments, as if he had never left them ; no dissipation of thought appeared, no alteration of taste ; much less was he discomposed by any slanders or affronts ; he was only afraid lest he should grow proud of this conformity to his Master. In short, he used many endeavours to be religious, but none to seem so : With a zeal always upon the stretch, and a most transparent sincerity, he addicted himself to every good word and work.

“ Because he required such a regulation of our studies, as might devote them all to God, he has been accused as one that discouraged learning. Far from that : For the first thing he struck at, in young men, was that indolence which will

not submit to close thinking. He earnestly recommended to them a method and order in all their actions. The morning hour of devotion was from five to six, and the same in the evening. On the point of early rising, he told them, the well-spending of the day would depend. For some years past, he and his friends have read the New Testament together in the evenings; and after every portion of it, having heard the conjectures the rest had to offer, he made his own observations on the phrase, design, and difficult places; and one or two wrote these down from his mouth.

“ If any one could have provoked him, I should; for I was very slow in coming into their measures, and very remiss in doing my part. I frequently contradicted his assertions; or, which is much the same, distinguished upon them. I hardly ever submitted to his advice at the time he gave it, though I relented afterwards. One time he was in fear I had taken up notions that were not safe, and pursued my spiritual improvement in an erroneous, because inactive, way; so he came over and staid with me near a week. He condoled with me the incumbrances of my constitution, heard all I had to say, and endeavoured to pick out my meaning, and yielded to me as far as he could. I never saw more humility in him than at this time.

“ Mr. Wesley had not only friends at Oxford to assist him, but a great many correspondents. He set apart one day at least in the week, to write letters, (and he was no slow composer,) in which, without levity or affectation, but with plainness and fervour, he gave his advice in particular cases, and vindicated the strict original sense of the Gospel precepts.

“ He is now gone to Georgia as a Missionary, where there is ignorance that aspires after Divine wisdom, but no false learning that is got above it. He is, I confess, still living; and I know that an advantageous character is more decently



bestowed on the deceased. But, besides that his condition is very like that of the dead, being unconcerned in all we say, I am not making any attempt on the opinion of the public, but only studying a private edification. A family picture of him, his relations may be allowed to keep by them. And this is the idea of Mr. Wesley, which I cherish for the service of my own soul, and which I take the liberty likewise to deposit with you."

# THE LIFE

OF THE

## REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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### BOOK THE THIRD.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### HIS MISSION TO AMERICA.

MR. HAMPSON, in his Memoirs of Mr. Wesley, expresses no small surprise, when he comes to treat of his mission to Georgia, at what appears to him a strange and unaccountable change of mind in one who had just before evinced such unshaken firmness. “We imagined,” says he, “that nothing less than stern necessity could have induced him to quit his beloved retirement.” Had he enjoyed any intimacy with Mr. Wesley, he would have been able easily to account for it.

We have seen how deeply Mr. Wesley’s mind was impressed with religious sentiments; and that he had devoted himself entirely to God. It has appeared also from his own words, how exceedingly painful to him was all commerce with the world; and that he had deeply imbibed even that undue love of retirement, which all good men have felt, more or less, from the Egyptian Hermits of the second century, down to the elegant and pious Cowley. But this was not all. He was

at that time an admirer of the Mystic Writers ; and though he had not embraced the peculiar sentiments of those who were grossly unscriptural, (from the time that he was *homo unius libri*, as he terms it himself, “ a man of one book,” valuing none comparatively but the Bible,) yet he still believed that many of the Mystics were, to use his own words, “ the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ, chiefly because they taught the necessity of crucifixion to the world.” And every one knows, as he has remarked, how continually those that are supposed to be the purest of them, cry out, “ To the desert ! to the desert ! ” What wonder then, if, at this time, when having only attained to what St. Paul calls “ the spirit of bondage unto fear,”—when every company, and almost every person, discomposed his mind,—when he found all his senses ready to betray him into sin, upon every exercise of them,—and when all within him, as well as every creature with whom he conversed, tended to extort that cry, “ *O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me ?* ” ;—what wonder, I say, that he should accede to a proposal, which seemed at one stroke to cut him off from both the smiling and the frowning world, and to enable him to be “ dead to the world ” and “ crucified with Christ,”—blessings which he *then* thought could be only thus secured. This is the account which he himself has given of his views and motives at that period. It will appear therefore, that his consent to go as a Missionary to Georgia only manifested a continuation and higher exercise of that determined resolution of being separate from the world, which he had evinced in his refusal to solicit the living of Epworth. But that he did not hastily agree to leave his pupils, friends, and country, is to be inferred from his own Journals, and has been fully explained to me by himself in several conversations.

Before I enter upon the narrative of his voyage and mission, it will be needful to state a few particulars. We have already seen his full determination, evinced in many instances,

to be not almost, but altogether a christian. His predilection also in favour of those writers who explain the gospel in a way of ascetic mortification, has been mentioned. A mind like his, impressed from his childhood with the fear of God, and a body unsubdued by sloth, intemperance, or even delicacy of any kind, admirably fitted him to bear all the severities, into which his sentiments naturally led him. Thus prepared "to tread the world beneath his feet," he issued from the retirement of a College, to embrace whatever he might meet with in the new and untried scenes which lay before him.

That he was, as every real minister of Christ is, in some sense and degree, "led into the wilderness to be tempted," will appear in the following sheets: And indeed he always considered his American Mission in that point of view. Speaking, in one of his Appeals, of his ministry in Georgia, he adds,—"where God humbled me, and proved me, and shewed me what was in my heart."

But he was not suffered to depart without many remonstrances from his friends. One, who he knew did not believe the Christian revelation, said to him, "What is this, Sir? Are you turned Quixote too? Will nothing serve you, but to encounter windmills?" He calmly replied, "Sir, If the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive. But if it be of God, I am sober-minded. For he has declared, '*There is no man that hath left house or friends, or brethren, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.*'"

To a friend who expostulated with him, he wrote his reasons at large. The substance of them has already been given; but the following letter, in which the whole question is detailed in order, exhibits his views in so strong a light, that I cannot withhold it from the serious reader. It has never before been published.

*“ October 10th, 1735.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have been hitherto unwilling to mention the grounds of my design of embarking for Georgia, for two reasons,—one, because they were such as I know few men would judge to be of any weight;—the other, because I was afraid of making favourable judges think of me above what they ought to think: And what a snare this must be to my own soul, I know by dear-bought experience.

“ But, on farther reflection, I am convinced, that I ought to speak the truth with all boldness, even though it should appear foolishness to the world, as it has done from the beginning; and that whatever danger there is in doing the will of God, he will support me under it. In his name, therefore, and trusting in his defence, I shall plainly declare the thing as it is.

“ My chief motive, to which all the rest are subordinate, is, the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ, by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments, to construe away the text; no vain philosophy, to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths, to reconcile earthly-mindedness and faith, the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the Gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God; and consequently they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints; the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things.

“ A right faith will, I trust, by the mercy of God, open the way for a right practice; especially when most of those temptations are removed which here so easily beset me.

Toward mortifying *the desire of the flesh*, the desire of sensual pleasures, it will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offence, to live on water and the fruits of the earth. This simplicity of food will, I trust, be a blessed means, both of preventing my seeking that happiness in meats and drinks, which God designed should be found only in faith, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and will assist me to attain such purity of thought, as suits a candidate for the state wherein they are as the Angels of God in heaven.

“ Neither is it a small thing, to be delivered from so many occasions, as now surround me, of indulging *the desire of the eye*. They here compass me in on every side; but an Indian hut affords no food for curiosity, no gratification of the desire of grand, or new, or pretty things:—Though, indeed, the cedars which God has planted round it, may so gratify the eye, as to better the heart, by lifting it to Him whose name alone is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.

“ If by ‘*the pride of life*’ we understand the pomp and show of the world, that has no place in the wilds of America. If it mean pride in general, this, alas! has a place every where: Yet there are very uncommon helps against it, not only by the deep humility of the poor heathens, fully sensible of their want of an instructor; but that happy contempt which cannot fail to attend all who sincerely endeavour to instruct them, and which, continually increasing, will surely make them in the end as the filth and off-scouring of the world. Add to this, that nothing so convinces us of our own impotence, as a zealous attempt to convert our neighbour; nor, indeed, till he does all he can for God, will any man feel that he can do nothing.

“ Further, a sin which easily besets me, is, unfaithfulness to God in the use of speech. I know, that this is a talent intrusted to me by my Lord, to be used, as all others, only for his glory. I know, that all conversation which is not seasoned with salt, and designed at least to administer grace

to the hearers, is expressly forbid by the Apostle, as '*corrupt communication*;' and as '*grieving the Holy Spirit of God*;' yet I am almost continually betrayed into it, by the example of others striking in with my own bad heart. But, I hope, from the moment I leave the English shore, under the acknowledged character of a teacher sent from God, there shall be no word heard from my lips but what properly flows from that character: As my tongue is a devoted thing, I hope from the first hour of this new era to use it only as such, that all who hear me may know of a truth, the words I speak are not mine but His that sent me.

"The same faithfulness I hope to shew, through His grace, in dispensing the rest of my Master's goods, if it please Him to send me to those who, like his first followers, have all things common. What a guard is here against that root of evil, the love of money, and all the vile attractions that spring from it! One in this glorious state, and perhaps none but he, may see the height and depth of the privilege of the first Christians, '*as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things*.'

"I then hope to know what it is, to love my neighbour as myself, and to feel the powers of that second motive to visit the Heathens, even the desire to impart to them, what I have received, a saving knowledge of the Gospel of Christ; but this I dare not think on yet. It is not for me, who have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and am yet laden with foolish and hurtful desires, to expect God should work so great things by my hands; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, he will then employ me, both to strengthen my brethren, and to preach his name to the Gentiles, that the very ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God.

"But you will perhaps ask, Cannot you save your own soul in England, as well as in Georgia? I answer, No; neither can I hope to attain the same degree of holiness

here, which I may there; neither, if I stay here, knowing this, can I reasonably hope to attain any degree of holiness at all: For whoever, when two ways of life are proposed, prefers that which he is convinced in his own mind is less pleasing to God, and less conducive to the perfection of his soul, has no reason from the Gospel of Christ to hope that he shall ever please God at all, or receive from Him that grace whereby alone he can attain any degree of Christian perfection.

“ To the other motive, the hope of doing more good in America, it is commonly objected, that there are heathens enough in practice, if not theory, at home: Why then should you go to those in America? Why? for a very plain reason;—because these heathens have Moses and the Prophets, and those have not;—because these who have the Gospel, trample upon it, and those who have it not, earnestly call for it; *‘therefore, seeing these judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, I turn to the Gentiles.’*

“ If you object, further, the losses I must sustain in leaving my native country, I ask, Loss of what? of any thing I desire to keep? No; I shall still have food to eat and raiment to put on,—enough of such food as I choose to eat, and such raiment as I desire to put on,—and if any man have a desire of other things, or of more food than he can eat, or more raiment than he can put on, let him know, that the greatest blessing that can possibly befall him, is, to be cut off from all occasions of gratifying those desires, which, unless speedily rooted out, will drown his soul in everlasting perdition.

“ But what shall we say to the loss of parents, brethren, sisters, nay, of the friends which are as my own soul, of those who have so often lifted up my hands that hung down, and strengthened my feeble knees, by whom God hath often enlightened my understanding, and warmed and enlarged my heart? What shall we say?—why, that if you add the loss



of life to the rest, so much the greater is the gain. For though *the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, the word of our God shall stand for ever*: Saying, that when human instruments are removed, He the Lord will answer us by his own self. And the general answer which he hath already given us, to all questions of this nature, is, ‘*Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left father, or mother, or lands, for my sake, but shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.*’ ”

We have here a full account of Mr. Wesley's views at this time, and of the religious system which he had adopted, in order, (1) to “*make his own calling and election sure,*” and (2) “*to spend and be spent*” for the good of mankind, and especially of the heathen, to whose service he was now devoted. It may, however, be thought, that the advantages which he proposed to *himself* in teaching the Indians could never be realized; as that plan seemed to be giving up learning, in order to be more benefited by ignorance. But that Gospel which was given especially for the *poor*, and which has always been counted “*foolishness*” by the *wise*, has, in truth, this peculiarity in it:—It considers men merely as sinners, and as such it proclaims deliverance to them.

Nor are these views peculiar to those who have studied in the same school. A very sensible and pious writer of the present day, treating on the same subject, thus confirms the views of the Founder of Methodism: “It introduces,” says he, “a more pure, simple, apostolic mode of preaching the Gospel. The situation of a Missionary, retired from the scene of debate and controversy, (so common to those who have long known the Gospel in its history,) who has continually before his eyes the objects which presented themselves to the attention of the Apostles, is favourable to an emancipation from prejudice of every sort, and to the acquisition of just

and enlarged conceptions of Christianity.”\* This was what Mr. Wesley meant, on this point, in the statement given above.

Previous to his embarking for America, Mr. Wesley wrote to his brother Samuel at Tiverton. His letter is dated October the 15th. In it he informs his brother, that he had presented his father's Commentary on Job to the Queen, and had received from her many good words and smiles. He then declares his sentiments concerning the usual method of teaching boys in Schools, by means of the Heathen Poets. “The uncertainty,” says he, “of having another opportunity to tell you my thoughts in this life, obliges me to tell you what I have often thought, and that in as few and plain words as I can. Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart; purity from *‘the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.’* Therefore, whatever has a tendency to impair that purity, is not to be tolerated, much less recommended, for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort are most of the Classics usually read in our great schools; many of them, (beside Ovid, Virgil's *Æneid*, and Terence's *Eunuch*,) tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, and more to feed the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I beseech you therefore, *‘by the mercies of God,’* who would have us *‘holy as He is holy,’* that you banish all such poison from your school, and that you introduce in their place such Christian authors as will work together with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God; for assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of heathen as well as I.

“So many souls [as you have pupils] are committed to your care by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin, but much more in the Gospel. You are to labour with all your might to convince them, that Christianity is

\* HALL'S Address to Eustace Carey.

not a negation, or an external thing, but a new heart,—a mind conformed to that of Christ; ‘*faith working by love.*’ ”

It should be noted, that what Mr. Wesley here condemns, is, the reading and explaining of the Heathen Poets *indiscriminately*; but that he would not have condemned a *selection* from them, is evident from his having, at a subsequent period, made and published such a selection for his own school at Kingswood. Mr. Wesley was not singular in this opinion. Dr. Whitehead has well observed, “The most learned and pious men in the Christian church, have, in all ages, thus spoken before him. Nay, the heathen moralists themselves deliver the same sentiments concerning their own poets. ‘Plato banished the poets from his imaginary commonwealth, and did not think them proper to be put into the hands of youth without great precaution; to prevent the dangers which might arise from them. Cicero \* approves of his conduct, and supposing with him, that *poetry contributes only to the corruption of manners, to enervate the mind, and strengthen the false prejudices consequent on a bad education, and ill examples*, he seems astonished that *the instruction of children should begin with them, and the study of them be called by the name of LEARNING and a LIBERAL EDUCATION.*’ ” †

\* Videsne poetæ quid mali afferant?—Ita sunt dulces, ut non legantur modo, sed etiam ediscantur. Sic ad malam domesticam disciplinam, vitamque umbratilem et delicatam, cum accesserunt etiam poetæ, nervos virtutis elidunt. Rectè igitur à Platone educantur ex eâ civitate quam finxit ille, cum mores optimos et optimum reip. statum quærerent. At vero nos, docti scilicet à Græciâ, hæc et à pueritiâ legimus et didicimus. Hanc eruditionem liberalem et doctrinam putamus!—Tusc. Quæst. lib. ii.

† The Jews prohibited the tutors of their children from instructing them in pagan literature. “Maledictus esto,” says the Gemara, “quisque filium suum sapientiam Græcanicam edocet.—*Let him be accursed whoever teaches his son Greek literature.*” The primitive Fathers of the Church were divided in their opinions on this subject. Some forbade Christians to read any of the heathen writers, on account of their bad tendency, both as to principles and morals. The Apostolical Constitutions, as they are called, speak in this strain, “Ab omnibus Gentilium libris abstine.—*Abstain from all books of the Gentiles.*” And though these Con-

On Tuesday, October 14, 1735, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles set off from London for Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte, in order to embark for Georgia. "Our end," says he, "in leaving our native country, was, not to avoid want, (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings,) nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honour; but singly this, to save our souls, to live wholly to the glory of God." Accordingly the two following days, which they spent partly on board, and partly on shore, they employed in exhorting one another "*to shake off every weight, and to run with patience the race set before them!*" There were six and twenty Germans on board, members of the Moravian Church. Mr. Wesley was much struck with their christian deportment, and immediately set himself to learn the German language, in order to converse with them.

stitutions are not *Apostolical*, yet it is allowed, on all hands, that they are very ancient. Cotelarius, in a note on this passage, has shewn the different sentiments of many of the Fathers; and it is probable, that a majority of them were of opinion, the heathen writers might be read with advantage, under certain restrictions and regulations. Basil the great has an oration, shewing, "*Quomodo ex scriptis Gentilium utilitatem capere debeamus.—How we ought to reap advantage from the writings of the Gentiles.*" The most learned and pious among the moderns have very universally condemned the practice of *indiscriminately* reading the writings of the heathens. On this subject, Erasmus complains in one of his letters, "*Pro Christianis reddamur pagani.—Instead of Christians, we are made Pagans.*"—And again, "*Animadverto,*" says he, "*juvenes aliquot, quos nobis remittit Italia, præcipue Roma, nonnihil adflatos hoc veneno.—I observe some youths, returned from Italy, especially from Rome, infected with this poison.*"—Buddæi Isagoge, par. i, p. 147. Buddæus himself observes, after giving the opinions of several others, "*Singulari utique hic opus esse circumspæctione, negari nequit; cum facile contingat, ut qui ethnicorum scriptis toti veluti immerguntur, ethnicum, plane, alienumque a religione christianâ, inde referant animum.—It cannot be denied, that there is here need of singular circumspection, as it easily happens, that they who are, as it were, wholly immersed in the writings of the heathens, return from them with a heathenish mind, alienated from the Christian religion.*"

Mr. Southey seems offended with Mr. Wesley's expression,—"*the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin:*"—But St. Paul uses the same words, even concerning the Ceremonial Law of Moses, when compared with the purity and power of the Gospel.

The Moravian Bishop also, and two others of his society, began to learn English, for the laudable purpose, there is reason to believe, of enjoying christian fellowship with those who so manifestly appeared to be walking in the same way. Mr. Wesley now began to preach *extempore*, which afterwards became his constant practice.

They sometimes visited General Oglethorpe, who was the Governor of Georgia, and with whom they sailed, in his cabin. Upon one of those occasions, as Mr. Wesley informed me, the officers, and certain gentlemen who had been invited, took some liberties with the clergymen, not relishing their gravity. The General was roused at this, and, in a manner not to be misunderstood, cried out, "What do you mean, Sirs?" "Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of learning and respectability. They are my friends; and whoever offers any affront to them, insults me." From this time they were treated with great respect by all the passengers.

"Believing," says Mr. Wesley, "the denying ourselves in the smallest instance, might, by the blessing of God, be helpful to us, we wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined ourselves to vegetable food, chiefly rice and biscuit." "We now," continues he, "began to be a little regular. Our common way of living was this. From four in the morning till five, we were engaged in private prayer. From five to seven, we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers. From nine to twelve, I usually learned German, and Mr. Delamotte, Greek. My brother wrote sermons, and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. At twelve we assembled together, to give an account to each other of what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner to four, we spent in reading to those of whom each of us had taken charge, or in speaking to

them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers; when either the second Lesson was explained, (as it always was in the morning,) or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation. From five to six, we again used private prayer. From six to seven, I read in my cabin to two or three of the passengers, (of whom there were about eighty English on board,) and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven I joined with the Germans in their public service; while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks, to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us."

I have given this account at large, as a specimen of his exactness in redeeming the time. Those who have not been intimately acquainted with Mr. Wesley, will be surprised at my declaring,—what I am persuaded is the truth,—that it would be difficult to fix upon a single day, in the fifty-three years which followed, that was not divided with as great precision. The employments might vary; but not the exact attention to the filling up of every hour!

That the time he spent with the passengers was not wholly lost upon them, we also learn from several passages in his Journals. Many were deeply awakened; others were instructed in the first principles of the christian religion, who were before entirely ignorant; and some, who had lived for years in a constant neglect of the public ordinances of the Gospel, were prevailed upon to attend them by the indefatigable labours of himself and his co-adjutors.

But though his eye was single; though his life was not only harmless but exemplary; though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and sacrificed ease and honour, and every other temporal gratification, that he might follow Christ; yet, it is certain, he was still very little acquainted with true expe-

rimental religion. This the Lord now began to shew him, First, by the fear of death, which, notwithstanding all his efforts, brought him into bondage, whenever danger was apparent. "At those times," he remarks, "I plainly felt I was unfit, because I was unwilling to die;"\* and, Secondly, the lively and victorious faith, which he evidently perceived in some of his fellow-passengers, still more convinced him, that he possessed not the saving power of religion.

Speaking of the Germans, he remarks, "I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behaviour. Of their humility they have given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive, no pay, saying, 'It was good for their proud hearts,' and 'Their loving Saviour had done more for them.' And every day had given them occasion of shewing a meekness, which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying, whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the Psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, 'Was you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, no' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.'"

A circumstance occurred in the course of his voyage, which is not unworthy of notice. Mr. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the cabin of General Oglethorpe, stepped in, to inquire the cause: on which the General immediately addressed

\* Mr. Southey, however, would have us believe, that this fear of death arose merely from the state of his stomach!

him, "Mr. Wesley, you must excuse me, I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear. You know, the only wine I drink, is Cyprus wine, as it agrees with me the best of any. I therefore provided myself with several dozens of it, and this villain Grimaldi, (his Italian servant, who was present, and almost dead with fear,) has drunk nearly the whole of it. But I will be revenged, He shall be tied hand and foot, and carried to the man of war. (He alluded to a ship of war which sailed with them.) The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for I never forgive."—"Then, I hope, sir, (said Mr. Wesley, looking calmly at him,) you never sin." The General was quite confounded at the reproof; and, after a pause, putting his hand into his pocket, he took out a bunch of keys, which he threw at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

At this time the Colony of Georgia had been founded only three years. The British Government had encouraged it as a defence for the southern provinces against the Spaniards; but it had been projected by men of enlarged benevolence, as a means of providing for those who were poor at home. Twenty-one persons were incorporated as trustees for twenty-one years, with power, during that time, to appoint all the officers, and regulate all the concerns of the colony. They were authorised also to collect subscriptions, for fitting out and supporting the colonists till they could clear the lands. The trustees contributed money, not less liberally than time and labour. The Bank subscribed largely, and Parliament voted Ten Thousand Pounds. The first expedition consisted of a hundred and sixteen settlers. General James Oglethorpe, one of the trustees, embarked with them; an active, enterprising, and zealous man. He is said to have taken with him Sir Walter Raleigh's original Journals, and to have been guided by them in the choice of a situation for his settle-



ment. This account is confirmed by the Indians : Their forefathers, they said, had held a conference with a warrior, who came over the great waters ; and they pointed out a funeral barrow, under which the chief who had conferred with him was buried, by his own desire, in the spot where the conference was held. It should seem that Raleigh had impressed him with an extraordinary respect for his character.

The country belonged to the Creek Indians. They were computed at this time to amount to about 25,000 souls, war and disease having greatly reduced their numbers. An Indian woman, who had married a trader from Carolina, acted as interpreter between her countrymen and the English. Fifty chiefs and elders from the eight tribes of the Creeks were deputed to confer with Oglethorpe, and treat about an alliance. In the name of these confederated tribes, Weccachumpa, the Long Chief, informed the British adventurers, what was the extent of country which they claimed as their inheritance. He acknowledged the superiority of the white men to the red ; he said, they were persuaded, that the Great Power, who dwelt in heaven and all around, (and he threw his hands abroad and prolonged his articulation as he spake,) had sent the English there for their good ; and, therefore, they were welcome to all the land which the Creeks did not use themselves.

Tomo-chachi, to whose tribe this part of the country belonged, then presented the General with a buffalo-skin, adorned on the inside with the head and feathers of an eagle. The eagle, he said, signified speed, and the buffalo strength. Like the eagle, the English flew over the great waters to the uttermost parts of the earth ; and like the buffalo, they were so strong that nothing could withstand them. The feathers of the eagle, he said, were soft, and signified love ; the skin of the buffalo was warm, and signified protection ; therefore he hoped the English would love and protect the little family of the Creeks. The alliance was soon completed : And the

General then presented to each of their Micoes, or Kings, a shirt, a laced coat, and a laced hat ; to each of their warriors a gun, with some smaller presents to their attendants.

General Oglethorpe returned to England the following year, bringing with him Tomo-chachi, Sinawki his wife, and Tooanahowi his son, with seven other Indians. They were presented to George II. at Kensington Palace, where the Micoe offered to the King a calumet or token of peace, and addressed him in the following characteristic oration : “ This day I see the majesty of your face, the greatness of your house, and the number of your people. I am come in my old days, though I cannot expect to see any advantage to myself : I am come for the good of the children of all the nations of the Upper and Lower Creeks, that they may be instructed in the knowledge of the English. These are feathers of the eagle, which is the swiftest of birds, and which flieth round our nations. These feathers in our hand are a sign of peace, and have been carried from town to town there. We have brought them over, to leave them with you, O great King, as a token of everlasting peace. O great King, whatever words you shall say unto me, I will faithfully tell them to all the kings of the Creek nations.” The orator addressed the Queen also in these words : “ I am glad to see this day, and to have the opportunity of seeing the Mother of this great people. As our people are joined with your Majesty’s, we humbly hope to find you the common protectress of us and all our children.”

The Indians had no reason to complain of their reception in England. A weekly allowance of twenty pounds was assigned them ; and they were entertained by several persons of distinction. Liberal presents were made them ; and when they embarked for their own country, they were carried in one of the king’s carriages to Gravesend. A number of Saltzburghers, expelled by their own government on account of their reli-

gion, went over with them. A large party of Highlanders followed in the year ensuing, and the prospects of the colony were so promising, that Parliament granted a supply of Twenty-six Thousand Pounds. Mr. Oglethorpe, with Mr. Wesley, his brother and their friends, sailed at the time already mentioned, with about three hundred passengers, in two ships.

Thursday, February 5, 1736, they arrived in Savannah-river in Georgia, and about eight the next morning landed on a small uninhabited island. General Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground, where they kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for Savannah. When the rest of the people came on shore, they also joined together in prayer. Upon this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, that the Second Lesson, Mark vi, seemed to him peculiarly suitable.

On February the 7th, the General returned with Mr. Spangenberg, one of the Pastors of the Germans. The same piety, which Mr. Wesley had observed in those on board the ship, was also visible in this gentleman. “I therefore,” says he “asked his advice with regard to my own conduct. He said, ‘My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. ‘Have you the witness in yourself? Does the Spirit of God ‘bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?’ I was surprised and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, ‘Do you know Jesus Christ?’ I paused, and said, ‘I know he is the Saviour of the world.’ ‘True,’ replied he: ‘But do you know he has saved *you*?’ I answered, ‘I hope, he has died to save me.’ He only added, ‘Do you know yourself?’ I said, ‘I do.’ But I fear they were vain words.”—David’s sling was here more than a match for Saul’s armour, though both were used in the same cause. Mr. Wesley was certainly not proud of his superior attainments, and he knew how little they availed in the things of God. But he did not yet know what would avail. He was taken out of his depth by the first question! We see

here how the "*babe in Christ who knew the Father*," even "*the least in the kingdom of God*," was greater than the wise and learned disciple of the great modern John Baptist, Mr. Law.

The house in which they were to reside not being ready, they took up their lodging with the Germans. "We had now," says Mr. Wesley, "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. For we were in one room with them from morning to night, unless for the little time I spent in walking. They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another. They had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the Gospel of our Lord in all things."

He proceeds, "Saturday, Feb. 28. They met to consult concerning the affairs of their church; Mr. Spangenberg being shortly to go to Pennsylvania, and Bishop Nitschman to return to Germany. After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a Bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies, where form and state were not, but Paul the tent-maker or Peter the fisherman presided, yet with *the demonstration of the Spirit and power*."

Sunday, March 7, Mr. Wesley entered on his ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the Epistle for the day, being the xiii<sup>th</sup> of the first of Corinthians. In the second Lesson, Luke xviii, was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which he himself, (and consequently his followers,) was to meet with from the world; and his gracious promise to those who are content, *Nudi nudum Christum sequi* :\* "*Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parent, or brethren, or wife,*

\* Nakedly to follow a naked Christ.

*or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life."*

"Yet," says he, "notwithstanding the plain declarations of our Lord, notwithstanding my own repeated experience, notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read, or heard of; nay, and the reason of the thing, evincing it to a demonstration, that all who love not the light, must hate him who is continually labouring to pour it in upon them;—I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie to experience, and reason, and Scripture, all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this attentive, serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of Him that spake it. O, who can believe what his heart abhors? Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Let us love thy cross! Then shall we believe, *'If we suffer with Thee, we shall also reign with Thee!'*"

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded to Frederica, Mr. Oglethorpe chiefly residing there. His brother remained at Savannah,—both waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians. On March the 9th, he landed on Simon's Island, near Frederica, and, as he informs us in his Journal, his spirit immediately revived. "No sooner," says he, "did I enter on my ministry, than God gave me a new heart;\* so true is that saying of Bishop Hall, 'The calling of God never leaves a man unchanged; neither did God ever employ any in his service whom he did not enable for the work.'" The first person that saluted him on his landing,

\* An anticipation of the Faith which he afterwards received.

was his friend Mr. Ingham: "Never," says he, "did I more rejoice to see him; especially when he told me the treatment he met with for vindicating the Lord's-Day." In the afternoon he began to converse with his parishioners, without which he well knew that general instructions would be of little use. But, he observes, "with what trembling should I call them mine!" In the evening he read prayers in the open air, at which Mr. Oglethorpe was present. The Lesson seemed remarkably adapted to his situation, and he felt the power of it,—"*Continue instant in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, that I might make it manifest as I ought to speak.*"

Some of the women who came out with them now began to be jealous of each other, and to raise animosities and divisions in the colony. The serious and religious deportment of Mr. C. Wesley, his constant presence, and his frequent reproofs of their licentious behaviour, soon made him an object of hatred; and plans were laid to ruin him with Mr. Oglethorpe, or to take him off by violence. These plans opened by degrees. March 11th, at ten in the morning, he began the full service to about a dozen women whom he got together, intending to continue it, and only to read some of the prayers to the men, in the morning before they went to work. He also expounded the second Lesson. After the service, he met Mrs. H.'s maid, in great distress at the treatment which she said she received from her mistress. He prevailed on the poor girl, who seemed almost ready to destroy herself, to accompany him to Mrs. H., whom he besought to forgive her, but in vain. Her rage was quite ungovernable. Soon after he met with Mr. Tackner, the husband of another of those daughters of violence, who, he observes, made him full amends: He was in a most excellent spirit, resolved not to contend with his wife, but with himself, in "*putting off the old man and putting on the new.*" This was the first taste

which he had of the spirit of the new settlers who had sailed with him from England. We shall see it more abundantly in the sequel. •

In the evening he received the first harsh word from Mr. Oglethorpe, when he asked for something for a poor woman. The next day he received a rougher answer in a matter which deserved still greater encouragement. “I know not,” says he, “how to account for his increasing coldness.” His *encouragement*, he observes, was the same in speaking with Mrs. W., whom he found “all storm and tempest; so wilful, so untractable, so fierce, that he could not bear to stay near her.” This evening Mr. Oglethorpe was with the men under arms, in expectation of an enemy, but in the same ill humour with Mr. C. Wesley. “I staid,” says he, “as long as I could, however unsafe, within the wind of such commotion; but at last the hurricane of his passion drove me away.”

Mr. C. Wesley’s situation was now truly alarming; not only as it regarded his usefulness, but his safety. Many persons lost all decency in their behaviour towards him; and Mr. Oglethorpe’s treatment of him shewed, that he had received impressions to his disadvantage: at the same time he was totally ignorant of his accusers, and of what he was accused. Conscious, however, of his own innocence, he trusted in God, and considered his sufferings as a part of the portion of “*those who will live godly in Christ Jesus.*”—Sunday, March 14th, he read prayers, and preached under a great tree, to about twenty people, among whom was Mr. Oglethorpe. “In the Epistle,” says he, “I was plainly shewn what I ought to be, and what I ought to expect. *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of Christ; in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings,*” &c. At night he found himself exceedingly faint; but had no better bed to lie down upon than the ground; on which he says,

“ I slept very comfortably before a great fire, and waked next morning perfectly well.”

He spent March 16th wholly in writing letters for Mr. Oglethorpe. He had now been six days at Frederica; and observes, “ I would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia.” Nothing, certainly, but a determination to do and suffer the whole will of God, could make such a place tolerable for such a man, for one day.

March 18, Mr. Oglethorpe set out with the Indians to hunt the buffalo upon the main, and to see the utmost limits of what they claimed.—This day Mrs. W. discovered to Mr. Wesley “ the whole mystery of iniquity :” This will appear in its proper place. He went to his myrtle grove, and while he was repeating, “ I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation,” a gun was fired from the other part of the bushes. Providentially he had, the moment before, turned from that end of the walk where the shot entered, and heard it pass close by him. This was, apparently, a design upon his life.

A circumstance now took place, which soon brought on an explanation between Mr. Oglethorpe and Mr. C. Wesley. The General had, more than once, given orders, that no one should shoot on a Sunday; and a man had been confined in the guard-room for it. In the midst of sermon, on Sunday the 21st, a gun was fired: The constable ran out, and found it was the Doctor, and told him it was contrary to orders, and he must go with him to the officer. The Doctor’s passion kindled: “ What !” said he, “ don’t you know that I am not to be looked upon as a common fellow ?” The constable not knowing what to do, went back, and, after consulting with the officer, returned with two centinels, and took the Doctor to the guard-room. His wife then charged and fired a gun, and ran thither like a mad woman, and said she had shot, and would be confined too. She cursed and swore in the utmost transport of rage, threatening to kill the first man that should come near her; but at last she was persuaded to go away. In



the afternoon she fell upon Mr. C. Wesley in the street, with the greatest bitterness and scurrility ; saying he was the cause of her husband's confinement, but she would be revenged, &c. He replied, that he pitied her, but defied all that she or the devil could do ; and he hoped she would soon be of a better mind. " In my evening hour of retirement," says he, " I resigned myself to God, in prayer for conformity to a suffering Saviour."—" At night," he tells us, " I was forced to exchange my usual bed, the ground, for a chest ; being almost speechless with a violent cold."

Mr. Oglethorpe was now expected to return from his excursion with the Indians ; and such was the violence of the party formed against Mr. C. Wesley, that the Doctor sent his wife to arm herself from the case of instruments, and forcibly to make her way to speak to the General first on his landing, and even to stab any person who should oppose her. " I was encouraged," says Mr. Wesley, " from the Lesson, '*God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power.—Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord,*'" &c.

Of the occurrences connected with Mr. Oglethorpe's return, Mr. C. Wesley gives the following statement:—" March 24th. I was enabled to pray earnestly for my enemies, particularly for Mr. Oglethorpe, whom I now looked upon as the chief of them ; I then gave myself up entirely to God's disposal, desiring that I might not now want power to pray, when I most of all needed it. Mr. Ingham then came and read the 37th Psalm, a glorious exhortation to patience, and confidence in God.—When notice was given us of Mr. Oglethorpe's landing, Mr. H., Mr. Ingham, and I, were sent for. We found him in his tent, with the people round it, and Mr. and Mrs. H. within. After a short hearing, the officers were reprimanded, and the prisoners were dismissed. At going out Mrs. H. modestly told me, she had something more to say against me, but she would take another opportunity.—I only answered, ' You know, Madam, it is impossible for me to fear you.' When they were gone, Mr. Oglethorpe said, he was

convinced and glad that I had no hand in all this. I told him, that I had something to impart of the last importance, when he was at leisure. He took no notice, but read his letters, and I walked away with Mr. Ingham, who was utterly astonished. The issue is just what I expected.—I was struck with these words in the evening Lesson: *‘Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound, therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake. It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.’*

“Thursday, March 25th.—At half past seven, Mr. Oglethorpe called me out of my hut: I looked up to God and went. He charged me with mutiny and sedition; and with stirring up the people to leave the colony. Accordingly, he said, they had a meeting last night, and sent to him this morning, desiring leave to go; that their speaker had informed against them, and against me, the spring of all; that the men were such as constantly came to prayers, therefore I must have instigated them; that he should not scruple shooting half a dozen of them at once; but that he had, out of kindness, first spoken to me. My answer was, ‘I desire, Sir, that you would have no regard to my friends, or the love you had for me, if any thing of this charge be made out against me. I know nothing of their meeting or designs. Of those you have mentioned, not one comes to prayers or sacrament. I never invited any one to leave the colony. I desire to answer accusers face to face.’ He said, my accuser was Mr. Lawley, whom he would bring, if I would wait here. I added, ‘Mr. Lawley is a man who has declared, *that he knows no reason for keeping fair with any one, but a design to get all he can by him; but there was nothing to be got by the poor Parson.*’ I asked, whether he was not assured, that there were men

enough in Frederica, who would say or swear any thing against any man, if he were in disgrace? Whether, if he himself was removed, or succeeded ill, the whole stream of the people would not be turned against him? and even this Lawley, who was of all others the most violent in condemning the prisoners, and justifying the officers? I observed, this was like the old cry, *Away with the Christians to the lions!* I mentioned R. and his wife scandalizing my brother and me, and vowing revenge against us both, threatening me yesterday even in his presence. I asked, what satisfaction or redress was due to my character? What good I could do in my parish, if cut off by calumnies from ever seeing one half of it? I ended, with assuring him, that I had made, and should still make, it my business, to promote peace among all.

“When Mr. Oglethorpe returned with Lawley, he observed the place was too public: I offered to take him to my usual walk in the woods. In the way, it came into my mind to say to Mr. Oglethorpe, ‘Shew only the least disinclination to find me guilty, and you shall see what a turn it will give to the accusation.’ He took the hint, and insisted on Lawley to make good his charge. He began with the quarrel in general, but did not shew himself angry with me, or desirous to find me to blame. Lawley, who appeared full of guilt and fear, upon this dropped his accusation, or rather shrunk it into my forcing the people to prayers. I replied, ‘The people themselves would acquit me of that;’ and as to the quarrel of the officers, I appealed to the officers themselves for the truth of my assertion, that I had no hand at all in it. I professed my desire and resolution of promoting peace and obedience. Here Mr. Oglethorpe spoke of reconciling matters; bidding Lawley tell the people, that he would not so much as ask who they were, if they were but quiet for the future. ‘I hope,’ added he, ‘they will be so; and Mr. Wesley here hopes so too.’—‘Yes,’ says Lawley, ‘I really believe it of Mr. Wesley: I had always a great respect for him.’ I

turned, and said to Mr. Oglethorpe, ‘ Did I not tell you, it ‘ would be so?’ He replied to Lawley, ‘ Yes, you had always ‘ very great respect for Mr. Wesley! You told me he ‘ was a stirrer up of sedition, and at the bottom of all this ‘ disturbance!’ With this gentle reproof he dismissed him; and I thanked Mr. Oglethorpe, for having first spoken to me of the things of which I was accused, begging he would always do so, which he promised. I walked with him to Mrs. H.’s door; she came out aghast to see me with him. He there left me, ‘ *and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*’ ”

Mr. C. Wesley continues: “ I went to my hut, where I found Mr. Ingham: He said, this was but the beginning of sorrows. ‘ *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*’ About noon, in the midst of a storm of thunder and lightning, I read the 28th Psalm, and found it gloriously suited to my circumstances. I never felt the Scriptures as now. I now find them all written for my instruction or comfort.\* At the same time I felt great joy in the expectation of our Saviour’s thus coming to judgment; when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and God shall make *my innocency as clear as the light, and my just dealing as the noon-day.* After spending an hour at the camp, in singing such Psalms as suited the occasion, I went to bed in the hut, which was thoroughly wet with to-day’s rain.

“ March 26. *My soul is always in my hand, therefore will I not forget thy law.* This morning, early, Mr. Oglethorpe called me out to tell me of Mrs. Lawley’s miscarriage, by being denied access to the Doctor for bleeding. He seemed very angry, and to charge me with it; saying, he should be the tyrant if he passed by such intolerable injuries. I answered, that I knew nothing of the matter, and it was hard that it should be imputed to me; that, from the first, Hermsdorff told the Doctor, he might visit any patients that he

\* So every man will find them, who walks according to them.

pleased, but the Doctor would not visit any. I denied, that I had the least hand in the business, as Hermsdorff himself had declared; and yet I must be charged with all the mischief! 'How else can it be,' said he, 'that there is no love, no meekness, no true religion among the people; but, instead of this, mere formal prayers?'—I said, 'As to that, I can answer for them, that they have no more of the form of godliness, than the power; for I have seldom more than six at the public service.'—He asked, 'But what would an unbeliever say to your raising these disorders?'—I answered, 'If I had raised them, he might say there is nothing in religion; but what would that signify to those who had experienced it? They would not say so.'—He said, 'The people were full of dread and confusion; that it was much more easy to govern a thousand than sixty persons; that he durst not leavet hem before they were settled.'—I asked him, 'Whether he would have me altogether forbear to converse with my parishioners?'—To this I could get no answer. I went on to observe, that the reason why I did not interpose for or against the Doctor, was his having, at the beginning, charged me with his confinement. I said, 'I have talked less with my parishioners these five days past, than I had done in any one afternoon before. I have shunned appearing in public, lest my advice should be asked; or, lest, if I heard others talking, my silence should be decyphered into advice. But one argument of my innocence I can give, which will convince even you of it. I know, my life is in your hands; and you know, that, were you to frown upon me, and give the least intimation that it would be agreeable to you, the generality of this wretched people would say or swear any thing.'—To this he agreed, and owned the case was so with them all.—'You see,' said I, 'that my safety depends on your single opinion of me. Must I not therefore be mad, if, in such a situation, I should provoke you, by disturbing the public peace? Innocence, I know, is not the least

‘protection, but my sure trust is in God.’ Here company interrupted us, and I left him. I was no longer careful for the event, after reading those words in the morning lesson, ‘*Thou shalt not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*’ Amen: When thou pleasest: thy time is best.”

In the midst of the storm, Mr. C Wesley wrote thus to his brother. His calmness and moderation are strikingly evident in this letter.

“FREDERICA, March 27th, 1736.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“I received your letter and box. My last to you was opened, the contents being publicly proclaimed by those who were so ungenerous as to intercept it. I have not yet complained to Mr. Oglethorpe. Though I trust I shall never either write or speak what I will not justify both to God and man; yet I would not have the secrets of my soul revealed to every one. For their sakes, therefore, as well as for my own, I shall write no more, and desire you will not. Nor will you have occasion, as you visit us so soon. I hope your coming may be of use to many

“Mr. Oglethorpe gave me an exceeding necessary piece of advice for you: ‘Beware of hypocrites, in particular of Log-house converts.’ They consider you as favoured by Mr. Oglethorpe, and will therefore put on the form of religion, to please, not God, but you. To this I shall only add. Give no temporal encouragement whatever to any seeming converts, else they will follow you for the sake of the leaves. Convince them thus, that it can never be worth their while to be hypocrites. Stay till you are in disgrace, in persecution, by the heathen, by your own countrymen: till you are accounted the off-scouring of all things, (as you must infallibly be, if God is true,) and then see who will follow you. I \*

\* His way of writing, as also of speaking, was always very short and sententious.

“ God, you believe, has much work to do in America. I believe so too, and begin to enter into the designs which he has over *me*. I see why he brought me hither ; and hope ere long to say with Ignatius, ‘ It is now that I BEGIN to be a disciple of Christ.’ God direct you to pray for me.—Adieu.”

What a superiority to all the machinations of his ungodly persecutors does this letter exhibit ! “ Calm on tumult’s wheel !” See the power that God gives to *sincerity* !—for, as yet, he had not the faith of the Gospel.

On the evening of the day when Mr. Charles Wesley wrote this letter, a thought came into his mind to send Mr. Ingham for his brother. Mr. Ingham was at first much averse to leave him in his trials, but at length was persuaded to go to Savannah ; and Mr. John Wesley set out from thence on the 4th of April.\* I shall continue my extracts from Mr. Charles’s narrative.

“ Sunday, March 28th.—I went to the storehouse, our tabernacle at present, to hearken what the Lord God would say concerning both myself and the congregation. I was struck with the first lesson, Joseph and Potiphar’s wife. The second was still more animating : ‘ *If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you ; if ye were of the world, the world would love its own.*’ After prayers, poor Mr. Davison staid behind, to take his leave of Mr. Ingham. He burst into tears, and said, ‘ One good man is leaving us ‘ already ; I foresee nothing but desolation. Must my poor ‘ children be brought up like these savages ?’ † We endeavoured to comfort him, by shewing him his calling. At ten o’clock Mr. Ingham preached an alarming sermon on the Day of Judgment. In my walk at noon, I was full of heaviness ; I complained to God, that I had no friend but Him, and even in Him could find no comfort. Immediately I received power to pray ; then, opening my Bible, I read as follows :

\* See Mr. Wesley’s Journal, vol. xxvi, of his Works, p. 127, 128.

† He meant the good Christians who came with them from England.

*‘Hearken unto me, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock from whence you were hewn: Fear not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their reviling. Awake, awake, flee away; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor? And where is the fury of the oppressor?’* After reading this, it is no wonder that I found myself renewed in confidence. While Mr. Ingham waited for the boat, I took a turn with Mr. Horton: He fully convinced me of the true character of Mrs. H.;—in the highest degree ungrateful, &c. &c. I then hastened to the water-side, where I found Mr. Ingham just put off. O! happy, happy friend! *Abiit, erupit, evasit:*\* but woe is me that I am still constrained to dwell in Meshech. I languished to bear him company, followed him with my eye till out of sight, and then sunk into deeper dejection of spirit than I had known before.

“March 29.—I was revived with those words of our Lord: *‘These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. They shall put you out of their synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he doeth God service,’* &c. Knowing, when I left England, that I was to live with Mr. Oglethorpe, I brought nothing with me but my clothes and books. This morning, asking a servant for something I wanted, I think a tea-kettle, he told me, that Mr. Oglethorpe had given orders that no one should use his things. I answered, ‘That order, I suppose, did not extend to me?’—‘Yes, Sir,’ said he, ‘you were excepted by name.’ Thanks be to God, that it is not yet made capital to give me a morsel of bread!

“March 30.—Having lain hitherto on the ground, in a corner of Mr. Reed’s hut, and hearing some boards were to be disposed of, I attempted in vain to get some of them to lie upon; they were given to all besides,—the minister of Frede-

\* He is gone; he has broken loose; he has escaped.



rica only must be ἀφρητωρ, ἀθεμιστος, ἀνεσις.\* Yet, are we not hereunto called,—αστατειν, κακοπαλειν? † Even the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. I find the Scriptures an inexhaustible fund of comfort. ‘*Is my hand shortened at all that I cannot save, or have I no power to deliver? Behold, the Lord God will help me : who is he that shall condemn me ?*’

“ March 31.—I begin now to be abused and slighted into an opinion of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon, were I a fallen Minister of State. The people have found out, that I am in disgrace, and all the cry is, *Curramus præcipites, et, dum jacet in ripâ, calcemus Cæsaris hostem.* ‡ My few well-wishers are afraid to speak to me ; some have turned out of the way to avoid me ; others have desired, that I would not take it ill if they seemed not to know me when we should meet. The servant that used to wash my linen, sent it back unwashed. It was great cause of triumph that I was forbid the use of Mr. Oglethorpe’s things ; which, in effect, debarred me of most of the conveniences, if not the necessaries, of life. I sometimes pitied them, and sometimes diverted myself with the odd expressions of their contempt ; but I found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of obloquy at Oxford.

“ April 1.—In the midst of morning service, a poor scout boat-man was brought in, who was almost killed by the bursting of a cannon. I found him senseless and dying ; and all I could do, was to pray for him, and try by his example to awaken his two companions. He languished till the next day, and then died.—Hitherto I have been borne up by a spirit

\* To be destitute of an habitation, and treated as an enemy to society, and as an unjust person.

† To have no certain dwelling-place ; to suffer afflictions.—1 Cor. iv, 11 ; 2 Tim. iv, 5.

‡ “ Let us run quickly ; and, while he is down, let us trample on the enemy of Cæsar.” These words were spoken originally of Sejanus, the fallen Minister of Tiberius the Roman Emperor.

not my own: but exhausted nature sinks at last. It is amazing she has held out so long. My outward hardships and inward conflicts; the bitterness of reproach from the only man I wished to please, at last have worn down my boasted courage. Accordingly this afternoon, I was forced by a friendly fever to take my bed. My sickness, I knew, could not be of long continuance, as I was in want of every help and convenience; it must either soon leave me, or release me from further sufferings. In the evening Mr. Hird and Mr. Robinson called to see me, and offered me all the assistance in their power. I thanked them, but desired they would not prejudice themselves by taking this notice of me. At that instant we were alarmed with a cry of the Spaniards being come; we heard many guns fired, and saw the people fly in great consternation to the fort. I felt not the least disturbance or surprise; bid the women not fear, for God was with us. In a few minutes, news was brought, that it was only a contrivance of Mr. Oglethorpe's to try the people. My charitable visitants then left me, and soon returned with some gruel, which threw me into a sweat.

“ The next morning, April 2, they ventured to call again: At night, when my fever was somewhat abated, I was led out to bury the scout boat-man, and envied him his quiet grave.

“ April 3.—I found nature endeavoured to throw off the disease by excessive sweating: I therefore drank whatever the women brought me.

“ April 4.—My flux returned; but notwithstanding this, I was obliged to go abroad, and preach and administer the sacrament. My sermon, on ‘ *Keep innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, for this shall bring a man peace at the last,* ’ was decyphered into a satire against Mrs. H.—At night I got an old bedstead to sleep upon, being that on which the scout boat-man had died.

“ April 6.—I found myself so faint and weak, that it was

with difficulty I got through the prayers. Mr. Davison, my good Samaritan, would often call or send his wife to attend me; and to their care, under God, I owe my life. To-day Mr. Oglethorpe gave away my bedstead from under me, and refused to spare one of the carpenters to mend me up another.

“ April 10.—Mr. Reed waked me with the news, that my brother and Mr. Delamotte were on their way to Frederica. I found the encouragement I sought, in the Scripture for the day, Psalm lii. *‘Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief? whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily. Thy tongue imagineth wickedness, and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor,’* &c.—At six my brother and Mr. Delamotte landed, when my strength was so exhausted, that I could not have read prayers once more. He helped me into the woods, for there was no talking among a people of spies and ruffians; nor even in the woods, unless in an unknown tongue.\* And yet Mr. Oglethorpe received my brother with abundant kindness! I began my account of all that had passed, and continued it till prayers. It would be needless to mention all the Scriptures, which, for so many days have been adapted to my circumstances. But I cannot pass by the lesson for this evening, Heb. xi.—I was ashamed of having well nigh sunk under my sufferings, when I beheld the conflicts of those triumphant sufferers *of whom the world was not worthy*.

“ April 11.—What words could more support our confidence, than the following, out of the Psalms for the day? *‘Be merciful unto me, O God, for man goeth about to devour me. He is daily fighting and troubling me. Mine enemies be daily in hand to swallow me up, for they be many that fight against me. I will put my trust in God, and will not fear what flesh can do unto me. They daily mistake my words,’* &c. The next Psalm was equally animating,—*‘Be merciful unto me,*

\* They conversed in Latin.

*O God, for my soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, till this tyranny be overpast. I will call unto the most high God, even unto the God that shall perform the cause that I have in hand. My soul is among lions; and I lie even among the children of men that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword,* &c. I just recovered strength enough to consecrate at the Sacrament; my brother performed the rest. We then went out of the reach of informers; and I proceeded in my account, being fully persuaded of the truth of Mrs. W's information against Mr. Oglethorpe, Mrs. H., and herself. At noon my brother repeated to me his last conference with Mrs. W in confirmation of all she had ever told me. Of this affair more will hereafter be related.

“April 17. My brother and Mr. Delamotte set out in an open boat for Savannah. I preached in the afternoon on, *‘He that now goeth on his way weeping and beareth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.’*

“Easter-eve, April 24. I was sent for at ten by Mr. Oglethorpe. He began, ‘Mr. Wesley, you know what has passed between us. I took some pains to satisfy your brother about the reports concerning me, but in vain; he here renews his suspicion in writing. I did desire to convince him, because I had an esteem for him; and he is just as considerable to me as my esteem makes him. I could clear up all; but it matters not; you will soon see the reason of my actions. I am now going to death; you will see me no more. Take this ring, and carry it from me to Mr. V. If there be a friend to be depended on, he is one. His interest is next to Sir Robert’s; whatever you ask, within his power, he will do for you, your brother, and family. I have expected death for some days. These letters shew, that the Spaniards have long been seducing our Allies, and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends, on whom I depended to send their pro-

‘mised succours. But death is nothing to me ;\* I will pursue ‘all my designs, and to Him I recommend them and you.’ He then gave me a diamond ring ; I took it, and said, *If postremum futo quod te alloquor, hoc est,*† hear, what you will quickly know to be a truth as soon as you are entered on a separate state ; this ring I shall never make any use of for myself : I have no worldly hopes, I have renounced the world.—Life is bitterness to me.—I came hither to lay it down.—You have been deceived as well as I.—I protest my innocence of the crimes I am charged with, and think myself now at liberty to tell you what I thought never to have uttered.”—It is probable that he then unfolded to Mr. Oglethorpe the whole plot, as Mrs. W had discovered it to him.

“When I had finished this relation,” proceeds Mr. C. Wesley, “he seemed entirely changed ; full of his old love and confidence in me. After some expressions of kindness, I asked him, Are you now satisfied ?—He replied, ‘Yes, entirely.’—Why then Sir, I desire nothing more on earth, and care not how soon I follow you.—He added, how much he desired the conversion of the heathen, and believed my brother intended for it.—But I believe, said I, it will never be under your patronage ; for then men would account for it, without taking God into the account. He replied, ‘I believe so too.’—He then embraced and kissed me with the most cordial affection. I attended him to the scout boat, where he waited some minutes for his sword. They brought a mourning-sword the first and a second time ; at last they gave him his own, which had been his father’s. ‘With this sword,’ said he, ‘I was never yet unsuccessful.’ When the boat put off, I ran into the woods to see my last of him. Seeing me and two others run after him, he stopped the boat, and asked if we wanted any thing ? Capt. Mackintosh, whom he left Commander, desired his last orders. I then said, God is with you ; go forth, *Christo duce, et auspice Christo.*

\* Poor empty boast ! † If this be the last time I am allowed to speak to you.

‘You have,’ said he, ‘some verses of mine: you there see my ‘thoughts of success.’ The boat then carried him out of sight. I interceded for him, that God would save him from death, and wash away all his sins.

“April 29. About half past eight, I went down to the bluff, to see a boat that was coming up. At nine it arrived, with Mr. Oglethorpe. I blessed God for still holding his soul in life. In the evening we took a walk together, and he informed me more particularly of our past danger. Three large ships, and four smaller, had been seen for three weeks together at the mouth of the river; but the wind continuing against them, they were hindered from making a descent until they could stay no longer. I gave him back his ring, and said, I need not, indeed I cannot, Sir, tell you how joyfully and thankfully I return this.—‘When I gave it you,’ said he, ‘I never expected to receive it again, but thought it ‘would be of service to your brother and you. I had many ‘omens of my death; but God has been pleased to preserve a ‘life which was never valuable to me; and yet in the continu- ‘ance of it, I thank God, I can rejoice.’ He appeared full of tenderness to me; and passed on to observe the strangeness of his deliverance, when betrayed on all sides, without human support, and utterly helpless. He condemned himself for his late anger, which he imputed to want of time for consideration. I longed, Sir, said I, to see you once more, that I might tell you some things before we finally parted. But then I considered, that if you died, you would know them all in a moment.—‘I know not,’ said he, ‘whether separate spirits ‘regard our little concerns: If they do, it is as men regard ‘the follies of their childhood; or, as I my late passion- ‘ateness.’” Could these words be uttered by any man of understanding who believed the Christian Revelation?

“April 30, I had some further talk with him; he ordered me every thing he could think I wanted: and promised to

have a house built for me immediately. He was just the same to me, he formerly had been."

Mrs. H. and Mrs. W were women of very loose morals; they had come from England in the ship with Mr. Oglethorpe, and while at sea, Mrs. W seemed to be under some religious impressions, but soon lost them on shore. The character of Mrs. H. was well known in England; Mr. Charles Wesley was informed by Mr. Hird, that Mr. Oglethorpe declared he would rather give an hundred pounds than take her in the ship. Though Mr. C. Wesley knew this, and the whole of her character, yet he never upbraided her with it, but patiently endured her revilings. His innocence appears on the very face of their proceedings; and hence Mr. Oglethorpe, when undeceived, attributed his own conduct to a want of time for consideration.

Mr. C. Wesley, being now more at ease from his persecutors, gradually regained his strength; and on the 11th of May he was sufficiently recovered to expound the Lesson.—On the 12th, the morning Lesson was respecting Elisha when surrounded with the host at Dothan. "It is our privilege as Christians," Mr. C. Wesley observes, "to apply those words to ourselves, '*There be more that be for us, than those that be against us.*'" God spoke to us yet plainer in the second Lesson.—'*Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.—But beware of men, for they will deliver you up, and ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my name's sake; and ye shall be hated of all men; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.—The disciple is not above his Master; fear ye not therefore, for there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed, and hid which shall not be made known.*'" In explaining this, he adds, "I dwelt on that blessed topic of consolation to the innocent, that however he may suffer here, he will shortly be cleared at God's righteous bar, where the accuser and the accused shall meet face to face, and the guilty person

acquit him whom he unjustly charged, and take back the wickedness to himself. Poor Mrs. W., who was just over against me, could not stand it, but first turned her back, and then retired behind the congregation." No one would have rejoiced more in her repentance and conversion to God, than Mr. C. Wesley.

May 13, Mr. Oglethorpe being gone to the Southward, Mr. Charles Wesley set out for Savannah, whither the Indian traders were coming down to meet him, in order take out their licences. On the 16th, he reached Thunderbolt at six in the evening, and from thence walked to Savannah,\* which is about five miles. His brother, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte were surprised at his unexpected visit; but, it being late, each retired to his corner of the room, and "without the help of a bed," says Mr. Charles, "we slept soundly till the morning."—On the 19th, Mr. John Wesley set out for Frederica, and Mr. Charles took charge of Savannah in his absence. "The hardest duty," says he, "imposed on me, was, expounding the Lesson morning and evening to *one hundred* hearers. I was surprised at my own confidence, and acknowledged it was not my own." The day was usually divided between visiting his parishioners, considering the Lesson, and conversing with Mr. Ingham, Delamotte, &c. On the 22d he first met the traders, at Mr. Causton's, and continued to meet some or other of them every day for several weeks.

May 31. Mr. Oglethorpe being returned from the Southward, and come to Savannah, he this day held a court. "We went," says Mr. C. Wesley, "and heard his speech to the people; in the close of which he said, 'If any one here has been 'abused, or oppressed by any man, in or out of office, he has 'free and full liberty of complaining: Let him deliver in his 'complaints in writing at my house; I will read them all over

\* This accords with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works, vol. 26, p. 130.



‘by myself, and do every particular man justice.’ At eight in the evening I waited upon him, and found the three Magistrates with him, who seemed much alarmed by his speech :— ‘*they hoped he would not discourage government.*’—He dismissed them.” We have here a curious specimen of the notions which the Magistrates of Savannah had of government.

“On the 21st of July,” says Mr. Charles, “I heard by my brother, who was then with Mr. Oglethorpe, at Savannah, that I was to set sail for England in a few days.” This was not merely on account of his health, which was now a little recovered : He was to carry dispatches from Mr. Oglethorpe, to the Trustees of Georgia, to the Board of Trade, and probably to Government. The next day, July 22, he got all the licences signed by Mr. Oglethorpe, and counter-signed them himself, “and so,” says he, “I entirely washed my hands of the Traders.” This seems to have been a business which he cordially disliked ; and thinking the present a favourable opportunity of escaping from his disagreeable situation, he wrote a letter to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 25th, resigning his office of Secretary. In the evening Mr. Oglethorpe took him aside, and asked whether the sum of all he had said in the letter, was not contained in the following line, which he shewed him,

*Magis apta Tuis, tua dona relinquo.*

Sir, to yourself your slighted gifts I leave

Less fit for me to take, than you to give.

“Sir,” said Mr. C. Wesley, “I do not wish to lose your esteem, but I cannot lose my soul to preserve it.”—He answered, “I am satisfied of your regard for me ; and your argument drawn from the heart is unanswerable : Yet I would desire you not to let the Trustees know your resolution of resigning. There are many hungry fellows ready to catch at the office, and in my absence [from England] I cannot put in one of my own choosing. Perhaps they may send me a bad man ; and

how far such a one may influence the traders, and obstruct the reception of the Gospel among the heathen, you know—I shall be in England before you hear of it, and then you may either put in a Deputy or resign.”

July 26. Mr. C. Wesley set out for Charlestown on his way to England. Thus far his brother accompanied him; and they arrived there on the 31st of July.\* He now found his desires renewed to recover the image of God; and at the Sacrament was encouraged, in an unusual manner, to hope for pardon, and to strive against sin.

In every place where he came, Mr. C. Wesley was attentive to the things which passed round about him. We cannot therefore wonder that the wretched situation of the Negroes should attract his notice. The following instance of depravity is truly in character. “I had observed much, and heard more,” says he, “of the cruelty of masters towards their negroes: but now I received an authentic account of some horrid instances thereof. I saw myself, that the giving a slave to a child of its own age, to tyrannize over, to abuse and beat it out of sport, was a common practice: Nor is it strange, that, being thus trained up in cruelty, they should afterwards arrive at such a perfection in it.”

“Another much applauded punishment,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “is, drawing the teeth of their slaves. It is universally known, that Colonel Linch cut off the legs of a poor negro, and that he kills several of them every year by his barbarities.

“It were endless to recount all the shocking instances of diabolical cruelty, which these men, as they call themselves, daily practise upon their fellow-creatures, and that upon the most trivial occasions—I shall only mention one more, related to me by an eye-witness. Mr. Hill, a dancing-master in Charlestown, whipt a female slave so long, that she fell down at his feet, in appearance dead: When, by the help of a

\* This account also agrees with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works, vol. 26, p. 145.

physician, she was so far recovered as to shew some signs of life, he repeated the whipping with equal rigour, and concluded the punishment with dropping scalding wax upon her flesh. These horrid cruelties are the less to be wondered at, because the law itself, in effect, countenances and allows them to kill their slaves, by the ridiculous penalty appointed for it. The penalty is about seven pounds sterling, one half of which is usually remitted if the criminal inform against himself."

Had the two Mr. Wesleys been now living, how greatly would they have rejoiced, and praised God, for the total abolition of the British Slave-trade, and for the humane measures lately proposed in our Parliament, and sanctioned by Government, with a view to the mitigation and *gradual* extinction of the state of slavery itself, in our West Indian Colonies.

While Mr. C. Wesley stayed at Charlestown, his bloody flux and fever hung upon him, and rather increased. Notwithstanding this, he was determined to go in the first ship that sailed for England. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from it, both because the ship was very leaky, and the Captain, a mere beast of a man, was almost continually drunken. But he was deaf to their advice. "The public business," says he, "that hurried me to England, being of that importance, that as their Secretary I could not answer, to the Trustees for Georgia, the loss of a day." Accordingly he engaged his passage on board the London Galley, which left Charlestown on the 16th of August. But they soon found, that the Captain, while on shore, had neglected every thing to which he ought to have attended. The vessel was too leaky to bear the voyage; and the Captain, drinking nothing scarcely but gin, had never troubled his head about taking in a sufficient quantity of water; so that, on the 26th, they were obliged to be reduced to short allowance. Meeting afterwards with stormy weather, the leak became alarming; and their difficulties increased so fast upon them, that they were obliged to steer for Boston in New England, where they arrived, with much difficulty and danger, on the 24th of September.

Mr. C. Wesley was soon known at Boston, and met with a hospitable reception amongst the Ministers, both of the town and neighbourhood. Having experienced much difficulty at Frederica, to prevent his letters to his brother from being read by others, he learned Byrom's Short-hand, and now for the first time wrote to his brother in those characters. He tells him, "If you are as desirous as I am of a correspondence, you must set upon Byrom's Short-hand immediately." Mr. John Wesley did so, and their correspondence was afterwards carried on chiefly in it.

The following letter was evidently written in a hurry, probably in the midst of company. A part of it is in Latin, which, as it shews the facility with which he wrote in this language, and also discovers something of the turn of his mind, I shall transcribe below.\* The substance of it I give in English.

"BOSTON, *October 5, 1736.*

"I am wearied with this hospitable people,—they so vex and tease me with their civilities. They do not suffer me to be alone. The clergy, who come from the country on a visit, drag me along with them when they return.† I am con-

\* "Tædet me populi hujusce φιλοξενία, ita me urbanitate suâ divexant et persequuntur. Non patiuntur me esse solum. E rure veniunt invisentes Clerici; me revertentes in rus trahunt. Cogor hanc Angliam contemplari, etiam antiquâ amœniorem; et nequeo non exclamare, O fortunata regio, nec muscas alens, nec crocodilos, nec delatores! Sub fine hujus hebdomadis navem certissime conscendimus, duplicato sumptu patriam empturi. Carolinensium nemo viatica suppeditavit; et hic itidem nil nisi cum pretio. Pessime me habet quod cogor moram hanc emere, magnumque pretium digressionis solvere.

"Morbus meus, aere hoc saluberrimo semel fugatus, iterum rediit. Suadent amici omnes, ut medicum consulem; sed Funera non possum tam pretiosa pati."

† Of Mr. C. Wesley's sincerity, any more than of his brother's, there can be no question. But he was still under "*the spirit of bondage*," and consequently not much at ease either with others or himself. This accounts for his being so vexed with the kindness of his new friends. It might be rather troublesome; but the spirit of love, the offspring of Gospel faith, would have easily borne it, and returned love for love. "Love is a present for a mighty king." HERBERT.

strained to take a view of this New England, more pleasant even than the old. I cannot help exclaiming, O! happy country, that cherishes neither flies,\* nor crocodiles,† nor informers. About the end of this week, we shall certainly go on board the ship, having to pay a second time for our passage. None of those from Carolina supplied me with provisions, and here also nothing is to be had without money. It vexes me to be obliged to purchase this delay, and to pay a great price for my departure.

“ My disorder, once removed by this most salubrious air, has again returned. All my friends advise me to consult a physician, but I cannot afford so expensive a funeral.”

Mr. C. Wesley did not go on board as he expected, the ship being detained some time longer. During his stay here, his disorder returned with violence, and reduced him to a state of very great weakness. On the 15th of October he wrote to his brother, and continued his letter in a kind of journal to the 25th, when he went on board the ship, and sailed for England. His account is as follows.

“ I should be glad for your sake to give a satisfactory account of myself, but that you must never expect from me. —It is fine talking while we have youth and health on our side ; but sickness would spoil your boasting as well as mine. I am now glad of a warm bed ; but must soon betake myself to my board again.

“ Though I am apt to think that I shall at length arrive in England to deliver what I am entrusted with, yet do I not

\* When Mr. C. Wesley was at Frederica, the sand-flies were one night so exceedingly troublesome, that he was obliged to rise at one o'clock ; and smoke them out of his hut. He tells us, that the whole town was employed in the same way.

† He means that species of the crocodile called the alligator. When at Savannah, he and Mr. Delamotte used to bathe in the Savannah river between four and five o'clock in the morning, before the alligators were stirring, but they heard them snoring all round them. One morning Mr. Delamotte was in great danger ; an alligator rose just behind him, and pursued him to the land, whither he escaped with difficulty.

expect, or wish for a long life. How strong must the principle of self-preservation be, which can make such a wretch as I am, willing to live at all!—or rather unwilling to die; for I know no greater pleasure in life, than in considering that it cannot last for ever.

———The temptations past  
 No more shall vex me; every grief I feel  
 Shortens the destin'd number; every pulse  
 Beats a sharp moment of the pain away,  
 And the last stroke will come. By swift degrees  
 Time sweeps me off, and I shall soon arrive  
 At life's sweet period: O! Celestial point  
 That ends this mortal story.——

“ To-day completes my three weeks' unnecessary stay at Boston. To-morrow the ship falls down. I am just now much worse than ever; but nothing less than death shall hinder me from embarking.

“ October 18.—The ship that carries me, must meet with endless delays: it is well if it sails this week. I have lived so long in honours and indulgences, that I have almost forgotten whereunto I am called; being strongly urged to set up my rest here. But I will lean no longer upon men; nor again put myself into the power of any of my own merciless species, by either expecting their kindness or desiring their esteem.

“ October 21.—I am worried on all sides by the solicitations of my friends, to defer my winter voyage till I have recovered a little strength. Mr. ——, I am apt to think, would allow me to wait a fortnight for the next ship: but then if I recover, my stay will be thought unnecessary. I must die to prove myself sick, and I can do no more at sea. I am therefore determined to be carried on board to-morrow, and leave the event to God.

“ October 25.—The ship fell down as was expected, but a contrary wind prevented me from following till now. At

present, I am something better : On board the Hannah, Captain Corney ; in the state-room, which they have forced upon me. I have not strength for more. Adieu."

On the 27th, Mr. C. Wesley had so far recovered his strength that he was able to read prayers. The next day the Captain informed him, that a storm was approaching. In the evening it came on with dreadful violence, and raged all night.

On the 29th in the morning, they shipped so prodigious a sea, that it washed away their sheep, half their hogs, and drowned most of their fowl. The ship was heavily laden, and the sea streamed in so plentifully at the sides, that it was as much as four men could do, by continual pumping, to keep her above water. "I rose and lay down, by turns," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "but could remain in no posture long. I strove vehemently to pray, but in vain ; I still persisted in striving, but without effect. I prayed for power to pray,\* for faith in Jesus Christ ; continually repeated his name, till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew that I abode under the shadow of the Almighty."

At three in the afternoon, the storm was at the height ; at four, the ship made so much water, that the Captain, finding it otherwise impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizen-mast. "In this dreadful moment," says Mr. C. Wesley, "I bless God I found the comfort of hope ; and such joy in finding I could hope, as the world can neither give nor take away. I had that conviction of the power of God present with me, overbalancing my strongest passion, fear, and raising me above what I am by nature, as surpassed all rational evidence, and gave me a taste of the Divine goodness." He at that time again anticipated the power and sweetness of Christian faith ;—no uncommon thing with those who mourn for it. See this subject well illustrated in Mr. John Wesley's Sermon on "The Spirit of bondage, and of adoption."

\* He means with confidence and comfort.

On the 30th, the storm abated ; and “ On Sunday the 31st,” he observes, “ my first business was, (may it be the business of all my days!) to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. We all joined in thanks for our deliverance most of the day.”

They soon met with another storm, but not so violent as the former ; and continuing their voyage, with some intervening difficulties and dangers, till the third of December, the ship arrived opposite Deal, and the passengers came safe on shore. “ I kneeled down,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “ and blessed the hand that had conducted me through such inextricable mazes, and desired I might give up my country again, whenever God should require it.”—A state of mind very different from that of many who have been called to labour for the Lord ! “ *Est istuc navigare ?*,” &c., says the soft Erasmus, (the Atticus of the Reformation, who strove to keep well with all parties,) “ *Are these things the lot of those who sail?* God forbid,” he continues, “ that I should ever think of encountering them !”—No, it was more easy and honourable for that eminent scholar to raise a laugh at the expence of the Papacy ; and, at the same time, to insinuate blame against the zealous REFORMERS, by whom the Lord was exposing “ *the Man of Sin*,” and giving life to the world.



## CHAPTER II.

### CONTINUATION OF MR. WESLEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA.

LEAVING Mr. Charles Wesley safe in his native land, we shall now proceed to his brother Mr. John Wesley.

On the 18th of March, 1736, he wrote to his mother as follows: “ I doubt not but you are already informed of the many blessings which God gave us in our passage; as my brother Wesley must, before now, have received a particular account of the circumstances of our voyage; which he would not fail to transmit to you by the first opportunity.

† We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination; and, by all I can learn, exceeding healthful,—even in summer, for those who are not intemperate. It has pleased God, that I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the Continent: nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners, who is sick at this time. Many of them indeed, are, I believe, very angry already: for a gentleman, no longer ago than last night, made a ball; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time, the church was full, and the ball-room so empty, that the entertainment could not go forward.

“ I should be heartily glad, if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth, or Wroote, would come over to me. And so would Mr. Oglethorpe too: He would give them land enough, and provisions gratis, till they could live on the produce of it. I was fully determined to have wrote to my

dear Emmy\* to-day ; but time will not permit. O hope ye still in God ! for ye shall yet give him thanks, who is the help of your countenance, and your God ! Renounce the world ; deny yourselves ; bear your cross with Christ, and reign with him ! My brother Hooper, too, has a constant place in our prayers. May the good God give him the same zeal for holiness which he has given to a young gentleman of Rotterdam, who was with me last night. Pray for us, and especially for, dear Mother,

“ Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

Mr. Wesley, being now informed of the opposition which his brother Charles met with at Frederica, on the 22d of March, 1736 wrote to him the following letter.—“ How different are the ways wherein we are led, yet I hope toward the same end ! I have hitherto no opposition at all : all is smooth, and fair, and promising. Many seem to be awakened : all are full of respect and commendation. We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last ; storms must come hither too : and let them come, when we are ready to meet them.

“ It is strange so many of our friends should still trust in God ! I hope indeed, that, whoever may turn to the world, Mr. Tackner and Betty, with Mr. Hird’s family, and Mr. Burk, will zealously aim at the prize of their high calling. These especially I exhort, by the mercies of God, that they be not weary of well-doing, but that they labour more and more to be meek and lowly, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God. I hope too Mr. Weston, Mr. Moore, Mr. Allen, and Mr. White, as well as Mr. Ward and his wife, continue in the same wise resolutions. I must not forget Mr. Reed, and Mr. Daubry, both of whom I left fully determined to shake off every weight, and with all their might to pursue the one thing needful.

\* His eldest sister Emelia.

“ *Conciones omnes meas jamnunc habes, præter istas quas misi. Aliquæ in pyxide sunt (de quâ ne verbum scribis) unâ cum bibliis in quarto. Liber de disciplinâ, quam celerrime potes, remittendus est. Quanta est concordia fratrum: Tui volo et fratris B.?* ‘ You have now all my Sermons, beside those ‘ which I have sent. Some are in the box (of which you say ‘ not a word,) together with the Bible in quarto. The book ‘ on discipline must be sent back as soon as possible. How ‘ great is the concord of brethren! I mean of thee and ‘ brother B.’

“ You are not, I think, at liberty *σρεφεσθαι εις τα εθνη, εως οι συμφυλεται σε απωθεσι σε—to turn to the Gentiles, till your own countrymen shall cast you out.* If that period come soon, so much the better: only, in the mean while, reprove and exhort with all authority, even though all men should despise thee. *Αποβησεῖται σοι εις μαρτυριον. ‘ It shall turn to thee for a testimony.’ \**

“ I conjure you, spare no time, no address or pains, to learn the true cause *της παλαι οδυνης της φιλης με†, ‘ of the former distress of my friend.’* I much doubt you are in the right. *Μη γενοιτο ινα ετω παλιν αμαρτανη. Γρηγορει φυλασσε, ως μαλιστα δυνη. Γραφε μοι, πως με δεη γραφειν προς αυτην. ‘ God forbid, that she should again, in like manner, miss the mark. Watch over her; keep her, as much as possible. Write to me, how I ought to write to her.’*

“ If Mr. Ingham were here, I would try to see you. But omit no opportunity of writing. *Κινδυνευω πασαν ωραν. ‘ I stand in jeopardy every hour.’—‘ Let us be strong and very courageous; for the Lord our God is with us: and there is no counsel or might against him!’ ”*

Mr. Charles Wesley took the hint his brother gave him, and on the 28th, sent Mr. Ingham to Savannah. April 4th,

\* See the same phrase, Luke xxi. 13.

† See a similar construction of *παλαι*, 2 Pet. i. 9.

Mr. Wesley set out for Frederica, in a pettiawga, a sort of flat-bottomed barge, and the following evening they anchored near Skidoway island, where the water at flood was twelve or fourteen feet deep. Mr. Wesley wrapped himself up in a large cloak, and lay down on the quarter-deck: but in the course of the night he rolled out of his cloak, and fell into the sea, so fast asleep that he knew not where he was, till his mouth was full of water. He swam round to a boat, and got out without any more injury, than that of wetting his clothes. This instance gives us a lively view of his fortitude and presence of mind in the midst of surprise and danger.

Mr. Wesley left Frederica, and arrived again at Savannah on the 20th. The next day he wrote to his brother; and, among other things, observes, “I still extremely pity poor Mrs. Hawkins: but what can I do more, till God shew me who it is that continually exasperates her against me? Then I may perhaps be of some service to her. There is surely some one who does not play us fair: but I marvel not at the matter. He that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there is that is mightier than they. Yet a little while and God will declare who is sincere. Tarry thou the Lord’s leisure and be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart.”

On the same day he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe, and told him, “Savannah never was so dear to me as now. I believe, knowing by whom I send, I may write as well as speak freely. I found so little either of the form or power of religion at Frederica, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it. Surely, never was any place, no not London itself, freer from one vice, I mean hypocrisy.

O curvæ in terris animæ, et cælestium inanes! \*

‘Jesus Master, have mercy upon them!,—There is none of those who did run well, whom I pity more than Mrs. Haw-

\* O grovelling souls, bent to the earth, and void of heavenly good!

kins: her treating me in such a manner would indeed have little affected me, had my own interests only been concerned. I have been used to be betrayed, scorned, and insulted, by those I had most laboured to serve. But when I reflect on her condition, my heart bleeds for her.—Yet with Thee nothing is impossible !

“With regard to one who ought to be dearer to me than her, I cannot but say, that the more I think of it the more convinced I am, that no one, without a virtual renouncing of the faith, can abstain from the public as well as the private worship of God.\* All the prayers usually read morning and evening, at Frederica and here, put together, do not last seven minutes. These cannot be termed long prayers: No Christian assembly ever used shorter: Neither have they any repetitions in them at all. If I did not speak thus plainly to you, which I fear no one else in England or America will do, I should by no means be worthy to call myself, Sir,

“Your’s, &c.,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

There subsisted, at this time, a dispute between the gentlemen of Carolina and Georgia, respecting the right of trading with the Indians. The dispute was brought into Westminster Hall, and agitated on both sides with great animosity. Mr. Wesley on the 23d of July delivered his opinion on the subject in a letter to Mr. Hutcheson. He observes, “By what I have seen during my short stay here, I am convinced that I have long been under a great mistake, in thinking no circumstances could make it the duty of a Christian Priest to do any thing else but preach the Gospel. On the contrary, I am now satisfied, that there is a possible case wherein a part of his time ought to be employed in what less directly conduces to the glory of God, and peace and good-will among men. And such a case, I believe, is that which now occurs; there

\* This was a broad hint, as Mr. Wesley used to say, to the General himself.

being several things which cannot so effectually be done without me ; and which, though not directly belonging to my ministry, yet are by consequence of the highest concern to the success of it. It is from this conviction that I have taken some pains to enquire into the great controversy now subsisting between Carolina and Georgia ; and in examining and weighing the letters wrote, and the arguments urged, on both sides of the question. And I cannot but think that the whole affair might be clearly stated in few words. A Charter was passed a few years since, establishing the bounds of this province, and empowering the trustees therein named to prepare laws, which, when ratified by the King in Council, should be of force within those bounds. The trustees have prepared a law, which has been so ratified, for the regulation of the Indian trade, requiring that none should trade with the Indians who are within this province, till he is so licensed as therein specified. Notwithstanding this law, the governing part of Carolina have asserted both in conversation, in writing, and in the public newspapers, that it is lawful for any one not so licensed, to trade with the Creek, Cherokee, or Chicasaw Indians : They have passed an ordinance, not only asserting the same, but enacting that men and money shall be raised to support such traders ; and in fact they have themselves licensed and sent up such traders both to the Creek and Chicasaw Indians.

“ This is the plain matter of fact : Now as to matter of right, when twenty more reams of paper have been spent upon it, I cannot but think it must come to this short issue at last : (1.) Are the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chicasaws, within the bounds of Georgia or no ? (2.) Is an Act of the King in Council, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, of any force within these bounds, or not ? That all other inquiries are absolutely foreign to the question, a very little consideration will shew. As to the former of these, the Georgian Charter, compared with any map of these parts which

I have ever seen, determines it: The latter I never heard made a question of, but in the neighbourhood of Carolina.

“ Mr. Johnson’s brother has been with us some days. I have been twice in company with him at Mr. Oglethorpe’s: and I hope there are in Carolina, though the present proceeding would almost make one doubt it, many such gentlemen as he seems to be; men of good nature, good manners, and understanding. I hope God will repay you seven-fold for the kindness you have shewn to my poor mother, and in her to, Sir,

“ Your most obliged, most obedient servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

At the same time he wrote to Mr. Vernon on the same subject. “ As short a time,” says he, “ as I have for writing, I could not pardon myself, if I did not spend some part of it in acknowledging the continuance of your goodness to my mother; which indeed neither she, nor I, can ever lose the sense of.

“ The behaviour of the people of Carolina finds much conversation for this place. I dare not say, whether they want honesty or logic most: It is plain, a very little of the latter, added to the former, would shew how utterly foreign to the point in question all their voluminous defences are. Here is an Act of the King in Council, passed in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, forbidding unlicensed persons to trade with the Indians in Georgia. Nothing therefore can justify them in sending unlicensed traders to the Creek, Cherokee, and Chicasaw Indians, but the proving either that this Act is of no force, or that those Indians are not in Georgia. Why then are these questions so little considered by them, and others so largely discussed? I fear for a very plain, though not a very honest reason; that is, to puzzle the cause.\* I sin-

\* The words of the old poet may be recollected here—

“ Bell, book, and candle, shall not drive me back,

“ When gold and silver bid me to go on.”

Alter it to, King, Council, Senate, shall not, &c.

cerely wish you all happiness in time and in eternity, and am, Sir, &c.”—It appears from these letters, that his mother was partly supported by the trustees.

Not finding any door open for the prosecution of the grand design which induced him to visit America,—the conversion of the Indians,—he and Mr. Delamotte considered, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock under their care. And they agreed, (1.) To advise the more serious among them, to form themselves into a sort of little Society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to improve, instruct, and exhort one another. (2.) To select, out of these, a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by their conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to their house ; and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.

Their general method of private instruction, was as follows : Mr. Delamotte taught between thirty and forty children to read, write, and cast accounts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechised the lowest class, and endeavoured to fix something of what was said in their understandings as well as their memories. In the evening he instructed the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon Mr. Wesley catechised them all : The same he did on Sunday before the evening-service. And in the Church, immediately after the second Lesson, a select number of them having repeated the Catechism and being examined in some part of it, he endeavoured to explain at large, and to enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

Some time after the evening-service, as many of the parishioners as desired it, met at Mr. Wesley's house, (as they did also on Wednesday evening,) and spent about an hour in prayer, singing and mutual exhortation. A smaller number (mostly those who designed to communicate the next day) met there on Saturday evening ; and a few of these



came to him on the other evenings, and passed half an hour in the same employment.

He had now another proof of the power of gospel-faith. One of the Moravians being ill of a consumption, he informed Bishop Nitschman of it. "He will soon be well," said he, "he is ready for the Bridegroom." Calling to see him afterwards, and asking how he did, "My departure (said he) I hope is at hand." Mr. Wesley then asked, "Are you troubled at that?" He replied, "O no; to depart and to be with Christ, is far better. I desire no more of this bad world. My hope and my joy and my love are there." The next time he saw him, the poor man said, "I desire nothing more, than for God to forgive my many and great sins. I would be humble. I would be the humblest creature living. My heart is humble and broken for my sins. Tell me, teach me, what I shall do to please God. I would fain do whatever is his will." Mr. Wesley said, "It is his will, you should suffer." He answered, "Then I *will* suffer. I will gladly suffer whatever pleases Him." The next day, finding him weaker, he asked, "Do you still desire to die?" He said, "Yes; but I dare not pray for it, for I fear I should displease my heavenly Father. His will be done. Let Him work his will, in my life, or in my death."

But concerning himself, Mr. Wesley observes, "This evening we had such a storm of thunder and lightning, as I never saw before even in Georgia. This voice of God, too, told me I was not fit to die; since I was afraid, rather than desirous of it! O when shall I wish to be dissolved and to be with Christ? When I love him with all my heart."

Some time before this, a few of the Indians had made him a visit, and seemed desirous of hearing *the great word*, as they called the preaching of the Gospel. About twenty of them were now at Savannah. Five of the principal of them came to him with an interpreter; and the following interesting conversation passed between them.

Q. Do you believe there is One above, who is over all things?

Paustoobee, one of their Chiefs, answered, We believe there are four beloved things above; the clouds, the sun, the clear sky, and He that lives in the clear sky.

Q. Do you believe, there is but One that lives in the clear sky?

A. We believe there are two with Him; Three in all.

Q. Do you think, he made the sun and the other beloved things?

A. We cannot tell. Who hath seen?

Q. Do you think he made you?

A. We think, he made all men at first.

Q. How did he make them at first?

A. Out of the ground.

Q. Do you believe he loves you?

A. I do not know; I cannot see him.

Q. But has he not often saved your life?

A. He has. Many bullets have gone on this side, and many on that side, but he would never let them hurt me. And many bullets have gone into these young men, and yet they are alive!\*

Q. Then, cannot he save you from your enemies now?

A. Yes; but we know not if he will. We have now so many enemies round about us, that I think of nothing but death. And if I am to die, I shall die, and I will die like a man. But if he will have me to live, I shall live. Though I had ever so many enemies, he can destroy them all.

Q. How do you know that?

A. From what I have seen. When our enemies came against us before, then the beloved clouds came for us. And often much rain, and sometimes hail, has come upon them,

\* We see this Indian, like the heathen mentioned in Acts xxviii, believed in a Particular Providence, which many, even of the learned, affect to despise.

and that in a very hot day. And I saw when many French and Choctaws and other nations came against one of our towns: And the ground made a noise under them, and the Beloved Ones in the air behind them: And they were afraid and went away, and left their meat and drink and their guns. I tell no lie. All these saw it too.

Q. Have you heard such noises at other times?

A. Yes, often: Before and after almost every battle.

Q. What sort of noises were they?

A. Like the noise of drums and guns and shouting.

Q. Have you heard any such lately?

A. Yes: Four days after our last battle with the French.

Q. Then you heard nothing before it?

A. The night before, I dreamed I heard many drums up there, and many trumpets there, and much stamping of feet and shouting. Till then I thought we should all die. But then I thought the Beloved Ones were come to help us. And the next day I heard above a hundred guns go off, before the fight begun. And I said, "When the sun is there, the Beloved Ones will help us, and we shall conquer our enemies." And we did so.

Q. Do you often think and talk of the Beloved Ones?

A. We think of them always, wherever we are. We talk of them and to them, at home and abroad; in peace, in war, before and after we fight; and, indeed, whenever and wherever we meet together.

Q. Where do you think your souls go after death?

A. We believe the souls of red men walk up and down near the place where they died, or where their bodies lie. For we have often heard cries and noises near the place, where any prisoners had been burnt.

Q. Where do the souls of white men go after death?

A. We cannot tell. We have not seen.

Q. Our belief is, that the souls of bad men only walk up and down; but the souls of good men go up.

A. I believe so too. But I told you the talk of the nation.

MR. ANDREWS, the Interpreter. They said at the burying, (which Mr. Wesley had attended shortly before,) "They knew what you was doing. You was speaking to the Beloved Ones above, to take up the soul of the young woman."

Q. We have a Book that tells us many things of the Beloved Ones above. Would you be glad to know them?

A. We have no time now but to fight. If we should ever be at peace, we should be glad to know.

Q. Do you expect ever to know what the white men know?

MR. ANDREWS. They told Mr. Oglethorpe, They believed "the time will come, when the red and white men will be one."

Q. What do the French teach you?

A. The *French Black Kings*\* never go out. We see you go about. We like that. That is good.

Q. How came your nation by the knowledge they have?

A. As soon as ever the ground was sound, and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men. Our old men know more. But all of them do not know. There are but a few, whom the Beloved One chuses from a child, and is in them, and takes care of them, and teaches them. They know these things, and our old men practise, therefore they know; but I do not practise, therefore I know little.

He was now in hopes that a door was opened, for going up immediately to the Choctaws, the least *polished*, i. e. the least corrupted, of all the Indian nations. But upon his informing the General of their design, he objected, not only the danger of being intercepted or killed by the French there, but much more, the inexpediency of leaving Savannah destitute of a minister. These objections he related to his friends in the evening, who were all of opinion, "That they ought not to go yet."

\* So they call the Priests.

Thursday, July 1. The Indians had an audience, and another on Saturday, when Chicali, their head-man, dined with the General. "After dinner," says Mr. Wesley, "I asked the grey-headed old man, what he thought he was made for? He said, 'He that is above knows what he made us for. We know nothing. We are in the dark. But white men know much. And yet white men build great houses, as if they were to live for ever. But white men cannot live for ever.' In a little time white men will be dust as well as I." I told him, 'If red men will learn the good Book, they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that book, unless we are taught by Him that is above; and he will not teach, unless you avoid what you already know is not good. He answered, 'I believe that he will not teach us, while our hearts are not white. And our men do what they know is not good; they kill their own children. And our women do what they know is not good; they kill the child before it is born. Therefore, He that is above does not send us the good Book.'"

The opinion of Mr. Wesley concerning the gods whom the poor American heathens worshipped, is worthy of our notice. "Meeting," says he, "with a Frenchman of New Orleans on the Mississippi, who had lived several months among the Chicasaws, he gave us a full and particular account of many things which had been variously related. And hence we could not but remark, what is the Religion of Nature, properly so called, or, that religion which flows from natural reason, unassisted by revelation; and that, even in those who have the knowledge of many truths, and who converse with their Beloved Ones day and night. But too plainly does it appear by the fruits, that *the Gods of these heathens too are but Devils.*

"The substance of his account was this: Some years past, the Chicasaws and French were friends. The French were then mingled with the Nautchee Indians, whom they used as

slaves, till the Nautchees made a general rising, and took many of the French prisoners. But soon after, a French army set upon them, killed many, and carried away the rest. Among those that were killed were some Chicasaws, whose death the Chicasaw nation resented; and soon after, as a French boat was going through their country, they fired into it, and killed all the men but two. The French resolved on revenge, and orders were given for many Indians, and several parties of white men, to rendezvous on the 26th of March, 1736, near one of the Chicasaw towns. The first party, consisting of fifty men, came thither some days before the time. They stayed there till the 24th, but none came to join them. On the 25th, they were attacked by two hundred Chicasaws. The French attempted to force their way through them. Five or six and twenty did so; the rest were taken prisoners. The prisoners were sent two or three to a town to be burnt. Only the commanding-officer, and one or two more, were put to death on the place of the engagement.

“I, and one more,” said the Frenchman, “were saved by the warrior who took us. The manner of burning the rest was, holding lighted canes to their arms and legs, and several parts of their bodies, for some time, and then for a while taking them away. They likewise stuck burning pieces of wood into their flesh all round, in which condition they kept them from morning till evening. But they commonly beat them before they burn them. I saw the priest, that was with us, carried to be burnt; and, from head to foot, he was as black as your coat, with the blows which they had given him.”

Mr. Wesley asked him, what was their manner of life. He said, “They do nothing but eat and drink and smoke from morning till night, and, in a manner, from night till morning. For they rise at any hour of the night when they awake; and, after eating and drinking as much as they can, go to sleep again.” “See,” exclaims Mr. Wesley, after

reciting these particulars, “*The Religion of Nature* truly delineated !”\*

After Mr. Charles Wesley had left Frederica, and gone to England, in the latter end of July, Mr. Wesley often visited that place; where he met with the most violent opposition, and the most illiberal abuse. He still, however, persevered in his endeavours to do them good; and, on the 13th of October, set out from Savannah, once more to visit them. He arrived at Frederica on the morning of the 16th, and met Mr. Hird on the Bluff, who gave him a melancholy account of the state of things there. The public service had been discontinued, and from that time every thing was grown worse and worse.—“Even poor Miss Sophy,”† says he, “was scarce the shadow of what she was when I left her. I endeavoured to convince her of it, but in vain; and to put it effectually out of my power so to do, she was resolved to return to England immediately. I was at first a little surprised; but I soon recollected my spirits, and remembered my calling. ‘Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.’

Non me, qui cætera, vincet  
Impetus; at rapido contrarius evehar orbi.’‡

“I began with earnestly crying to God to maintain his own cause; and then began reading to a few who came to my house in the evenings, one of Ephrem Syrus’s exhortations, as I did every night after, and by the blessing of God not without effect. My next step was, to divert Miss Sophy from the fatal resolution of going to England. After several fruitless attempts, I at length prevailed; nor was it long before she recovered the ground she had lost.”—So it appeared to Mr. Wesley who dared not “*think evil*.” 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

\* This is an allusion to an *infidel publication* of that day which was so entitled.

† We shall soon see more respecting this Lady.

‡ That force shall not overcome me, which overcomes all things else;  
But I shall mount in a direction contrary to the rapid world.

“ October 23.—Mr. Ogiethorpe returned from the southward. I was in the fort with Mr. Horton, when he came. He ran to Mr. Horton, kissed him, and expressed much kindness to him, but took no notice of me good or bad, any more than if I had not been in the room. I was not surprised, having long expected it. When I mentioned it to Miss Sophy, she said; ‘ Sir, you encouraged me in my greatest trials; be not discouraged yourself. Fear nothing; if Mr. Oglethorpe will not, God will help you.’ ”

“ October 25.—I took boat for Savannah, with Miss Sophy; and came thither, after a slow and dangerous, but not a tedious passage, on Sunday the 31st.” \*

Few would perhaps expect that a person so abundant in labours, would entertain such an opinion of himself as he expresses in a letter to a friend. “ How to attain to the being crucified with Christ, I find not; being in a condition I neither desired, nor expected in America,—in ease, and honour, and abundance. A strange school for him who has but one business, *Γυμναζεῖν σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσεβείαν.*” † He thought mortification would, of course, produce sanctification, (a common error of the Mystics,) and therefore he dreaded every thing contrary to it.

Alas! few, we doubt, would have envied the condition, in which he was placed. The inconveniencies and dangers which he embraced, that he might preach the Gospel, and do good of every kind, to all that would receive it at his hands: the exposing of himself to every change of season, and inclemency of weather, in the prosecution of his work, were conditions, to which few but himself would have submitted. He frequently slept on the ground, as he journeyed through the woods, covered with the nightly dews, and with his clothes and hair frozen by the morning to the earth. He sometimes waded

\* See also his printed Journal, in his Works, vol. xxvi. p. 150.

† “ To exercise himself unto godliness.”



through swamps, or swim over rivers, and then travelled till his clothes were dry. His health in the mean time, strange as it may seem, was almost uninterrupted. Much may be laid to the account of his "iron body," as his brother Samuel terms it; but we think every pious mind will rather impute both his health and preservation to Him who "*numbers the hairs of our head,*" and whose guardian care is especially over those, who aim to "*walk worthy of him unto all pleasing.*"

But the honour and respect he then enjoyed, small as they must have been, soon drew to an end. He now began to experience more fully than ever, the truth of that Scripture, "*If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.*" Previous to the present period, some dislike began to appear in several persons to his rigid attachment to all the parts of the Rubrick of the Church of England. High Church principles, as they are termed, continually influenced his conduct; an instance of which was, his refusal to admit one of the holiest men in the province to the Lord's supper, (though he earnestly desired it,) because he was a Dissenter, unless he would submit to be re-baptised! But this appeared to him as his duty; and in that case, till God taught him better, it was vain to attempt to move him. Reflecting on this zeal at a future period, he remarks, "Have I not been finely beaten with my own staff?"

All things at this period grew more and more unfavourable to his continuance in America. Observing a coldness in the behaviour of a friend, he asked him the reason. He answered, "I like nothing you do: all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Therefore I will never hear you more. And all the people are of my mind. For we will not hear ourselves abused.

"Besides, they say, they are Protestants. But as for you, they cannot tell what religion you are of. They never heard

of such a religion before. They do not know what to make of it. And then, your private behaviour.—All the quarrels that have been here since you came, have been owing to you. Indeed there is neither man nor woman in the town, who minds a word you say. And so you may preach long enough; but nobody will come to hear you.”

The dread of reproof seems now to have ripened to aversion, when an event took place, which ultimately obliged him to leave America. There is a silence observed in Mr. Wesley's Journal in respect to some parts of this event, which it is possible has caused even friendly readers, to hesitate concerning the propriety of his conduct; or at least concerning that propriety which they might be led to expect from so great a character. But what has hitherto been defective, I am happy in being able to supply. The actors in this scene are now, we may hope, in a better world; the last of them died a very few years before Mr. Wesley. I am not therefore bound, as Mr. Wesley thought himself, when he published the account, to let a veil be thrown over this transaction: but rather to let “*his innocence appear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day.*”

General Oglethorpe was, what is called, an excellent judge of human nature. He was also a man of courage and enterprise. He had enlarged views of what might be done, with proper instruments, on the wide continent of America. He had heard much of Mr. Wesley before he engaged himself as a Missionary, having been intimate with his eldest brother. But he saw, during the voyage, that the half was not told him. He saw a man of great ability, a man superior to every thing that usually captivates human nature. He saw a man, as he thought, fit for his purpose. But Mr. Wesley's religion, or, as he termed it, his enthusiasm, the General lamented, as standing in the way. On their arrival, therefore, in Georgia, he resolved to try, if that obstacle was not to be surmounted.

Miss Sophy,\* the lady already mentioned, was niece to Mrs. Causton, the wife of Mr. Causton the store-keeper, and chief magistrate of Savannah, in which station he was placed by the General. In this lady, who had an improved understanding, and elegant person and manners, General Oglethorpe thought he had found a proper bait for this "soaring religionist." And as some of the greatest men that are recorded even in the oracles of God, have fallen by this snare, he had some ground to hope for success. But, in order to this, it was absolutely needful to detain him for some considerable time at Savannah. Whenever, therefore, he mentioned his uneasiness at being obstructed in his main design, that of preaching to the Indians, he was answered, "You cannot leave Savannah without a minister." "To this indeed," observes Mr. Wesley, "my plain answer was, I know not that I am under any obligation to the contrary. I never promised to stay here one month. I openly declared both before, at, and ever since my coming hither, that I neither would nor could take charge of the English any longer than till I could go among the Indians. If it was said, 'But did not the trustees of Georgia appoint you to be minister of Savannah?' I replied, They did; but it was not done by my solicitation; it was done without either my desire or knowledge. Therefore I cannot conceive that appointment to lay me under any obligation of continuing here, any longer than till a door is opened to the Heathens; and this I expressly declared, at the time I consented to accept that appointment."

Miss Sophy had been some time before introduced to him as a sincere inquirer after the way of eternal life. After some time he observed, that she took every possible opportunity of being in his company. She also desired a greater intimacy, but modestly veiled her real motive, under a request,

\* Her name was not Causton. Mr. Wesley told me her name, but I cannot recollect it.

that he would assist her in attaining a perfect knowledge of the French tongue.

After some time the General called upon him, and requested him to dine with him : adding, “ Mr. Wesley, there are some here who have a wrong idea of your abstemiousness. They think that you hold the eating of animal food, and drinking wine, to be unlawful. I beg that you will convince them of the contrary ” He resolved to do so. At table he took a little of both, but a fever was the consequence, which confined him for five days.

Now was the time to try if indeed “ his heart was made of penetrable stuff.” Notwithstanding an extreme reluctance on his part, (who would hardly suffer even Mr. Delamotte to do any thing for him,) the young lady attended him night and day. She even consulted the General what dress would be most agreeable to Mr. Wesley, and therefore came always dressed in white, “ *simplex munditiis*,” as Horace said of his mistress, neatly, simply elegant. Those who have known Mr. Wesley, will forestall our judgment here : They well know what impression all this was likely to make. He was indeed, as our great poet observes,

——Of a constant, loving, noble nature ;  
That thinks men honest, if they seem but so.

How then must this appearance of strong affection, from a woman of sense and elegance, nay, and as it should seem, of piety too, affect him ! Especially considering, (it is his own account,) that he had never before familiarly conversed with any woman, except his near relations. I hardly need to add, that, upon his recovery, he entertained his fair pupil with more than usual complacency.

But Mr. Delamotte had not learned, (to use a common expression of Mr. Wesley’s,) to “ defy suspicion.” He thought he saw

Semblance of worth, not substance.

He therefore embraced an opportunity of expostulating with Mr. Wesley; and asked him, if he designed to marry Miss Sophy? At the same time he set forth, in a strong light, her art and his simplicity. Though pleased with the attention of his fair friend, Mr. Wesley had not allowed himself to determine upon marriage;\* Mr. Delamotte's question therefore not a little puzzled him. He waved an answer at that time; and perceiving the prejudice of Mr. Delamotte's mind against the Lady, he called on Bishop Nitschman, and consulted him. His answer was short. "Marriage," said he, "you know, is not unlawful. Whether it is now expedient for you, and whether this Lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely weighed." Finding his perplexity increase, he determined to propose his doubts to the elders of the Moravian Church. When he entered into the house, where they were met together, he found Mr. Delamotte sitting among them. On his proposing the business, the Bishop replied, "We have considered your case. Will you abide by our decision?" He answered, after some hesitation, "I will." "Then," said the Bishop, "we advise you to proceed no further in this business." He replied, "The will of the Lord be done!" From this time, he behaved with the greatest caution towards her, and avoided every thing that tended to continue the intimacy, though he easily perceived what pain this change in his conduct gave her, as it did also to himself.

Soon after this, one of those ladies already mentioned in this narrative, came to him, and related, under a promise of secrecy, what I have now declared concerning the hitherto mysterious part of this event; adding these words, "Sir, I had no rest till I resolved to tell you the whole affair. I have

\* Dr. Whitehead affirms, "he did intend to marry her, and was not a little pained when she broke off the connexion." I know that she ultimately broke it off; but I know also that he did not at any time determine on marriage. I had the whole account from himself; and I do not know, that he ever told it to any other person.

myself been urged to that behaviour towards you, which I am now ashamed to mention."

During the voyage from England, Mrs. W., already noted, was extremely ill with sea-sickness, so that Mr. Oglethorpe gave her the use of his cabin and bed, which Mr. Samuel Wesley mentions in one of his letters as an act of great kindness. One morning she issued from her retirement in a state of apparent distraction. Mr. J. Wesley, who had taken much pains to impress her mind with religious truth, strove to calm the tempest in her soul, and exhorted her to pray. She exclaimed, "Pray! I cannot pray: God has cast me off." He replied, "Madam, you must pray." She again cried out, "I cannot pray! I cannot pray! I am lost." When we consider what companions the pious brothers had in their voyage, and the characters of those who were chiefly to form the infant colony, can we wonder at any thing that happened?

She prefaced the communication which she afterwards made to Mr. Wesley with observing, "Sir, it is said, a woman cannot keep the secret of another.—It is strange, however, that I cannot keep my own: but I really cannot." It is no wonder that the General should say to Mr. C. Wesley, that "he had taken pains to satisfy his brother, but in vain." Mr. Wesley knew too much, and had a mind too well disposed, to be easily satisfied. But he still hoped for his friend, knowing the state of his mind, and the impossibility of his having power over sin while in that state. He also informed me, (and the record is before me in his MSS.,) that one of those ladies, (I am not sure which,) desired a private interview with him; and, after accusing him of having betrayed her, she attempted to stab him with a pair of long sharp scissars which she had concealed. But he caught her wrist, and after a great struggle, prevented her design.

Mr. Wesley kept his word, and cautiously avoided and

concealed every thing, which could bring any inconvenience on this unhappy woman. He could not however behave to the General as he had formerly done. One day he dropped some expressions which made the General change his colour, and discover much agitation of mind. However, on recovering himself, he replied, in a very significant manner, “ You observed yesterday the company of Indians that came into the town. The fellow that marched at their head, with his face marked with red paint, will shoot any man in this colony for a bottle of rum !” Mr. Wesley did not think it proper to reply : but, to shew how little he regarded the menace, he took a book out of his pocket, and beginning to read, walked slowly towards his own house.

The next morning, as he was reading with his back to the window, he suddenly found his light obstructed ; and turning round, he perceived the Indian standing at the window. He immediately stepped to the door, invited him to walk in, and spread before him the best food that the house afforded. And as he had learned some words of the Indian language, he cheerfully requested him to eat. The Indian for some time surveyed him from head to foot with great attention ; then throwing down his gun, he seized him in his arms, and kissed him with the greatest eagerness. He then ate heartily, and departed after another warm embrace, and with every appearance of the highest satisfaction. \*

The General soon after this sailed for Europe. But one of the last charges which he gave, and that in the presence of several persons, was, “ Causton, whatever you do, take heed, if you regard my favour, that you do not quarrel with Mr. Wesley.” †

\* The Indian was evidently sent to intimidate him.

† Many years after this, General Oglethorpe met Mr. Wesley at the house of his brother Charles in London. And as soon as he entered the room, the General, in the presence of a very numerous company, advanced, and bowing down, kissed his hand !

The wound which Mr. Wesley had received still festered in his mind. He remarks in his Journal, Feb. 5, 1737: "One of the most remarkable dispensations of Providence towards me, which I have yet known, began to shew itself this day. For many days after, I could not at all judge which way the scale would turn; nor was it fully determined till March 4th, on which day God commanded me to pull out my right eye; and by his grace I determined so to do: But being slack in the execution, on Sat. March 12, God being very merciful to me, my friend performed what I could not.\*

"I have often thought, one of the most difficult commands that ever was given, was that given to Ezekiel concerning his wife. But the difficulty of obeying such a direction, appeared to me now more than ever before. When, considering the character I bore, I could not but perceive, that the word of the Lord was come to me likewise, saying, '*Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn, nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.*'"

Feb. 24. It was agreed that Mr. Ingham should sail for England, and endeavour, if it should please God, to bring over some of their friends to strengthen their hands in his work. By him, Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe; and this letter shews both his zeal and entire openness of heart, in pursuing and inculcating, without fear, what he deemed most excellent. It is as follows: "Sir, you apprehended strong opposition before you went hence; and, unless we are misinformed, you have found it. Yesterday morning, I read a letter from London, wherein it was asserted, that Sir Robert had turned against you; that the Parliament was resolved to make a severe scrutiny into all that has been transacted here; that the cry of the nation ran the same way; and that even

\* This relates to Miss Sophy's being addressed by a Mr. Williamson, to whom she was afterwards married.



the Trustees were so far from acknowledging the service you have done, that they had protested your bills, and charged you with misapplying the monies you had received, and with gross mismanagement of the power wherewith you was intrusted.—Whether these things are so, or no, I know not; for it is ill depending on a single evidence. But this I know, that if your scheme was drawn (which I shall not easily believe) from that first-born of hell, Nicholas Machiavel,\* as sure as there is a God that governs the earth, he will confound both it and you. If, on the contrary, (as I shall hope, till strong proof appear,) your heart was right before God; that it was your real design to promote the glory of God, by promoting peace and love among men; let not your heart be troubled; the God whom you serve is able to deliver you. Perhaps in some things you have shewn you are but a man: Perhaps I myself may have a little to complain of: But O what a train of benefits have I received, to lay in the balance against it! I bless God that ever you was born. I acknowledge his exceeding mercy, in casting me into your hands. I own your generous kindness all the time we were at sea: I am

\* Nicholas Machiavel was born of a distinguished family at Florence. Of all his writings, a political treatise entitled the “Prince,” has made the greatest noise in the world. Mr. Wesley speaks thus of it: “If all the other doctrines of devils which have been committed to writing since letters were in the world, were collected together in one volume, it would fall short of this: And that should a prince form himself by this book, so calmly recommending hypocrisy, treachery, lying, robbery, oppression, adultery, whoredom, and murder of all kinds; Domitian or Nero would be an angel of light compared with that man.” The world is not agreed as to the motive of this work; some thinking he meant to recommend tyrannical maxims; others, that he only delineated them to excite abhorrence. Harrington considers Machiavel, as a superior genius, and as the most excellent writer on politics and government that ever appeared. Some have said, his greatest fault was, that he told the world what bad princes did, not what they ought to do; and that his principles, though daily condemned, are daily put in practice. It has also been said, that he took his political maxims from the government of the Popes. One thing is however clear, that he wrote utterly without, and indeed against, God. He died in 1530.

indebted to you for a thousand favours here : Why then, the least I can say is, though all men should revile you, yet, (if God shall strengthen me,) will not I : Yea, were it not for the poor creatures, whom you have as yet but half redeemed from their complicated misery, I could almost wish that you were forsaken of all ; that you might clearly see the difference, between *men of honour*, and those who are, in the very lowest rank, the followers of Christ Jesus.

“ O ! where is the God of Elijah ? Stir up thy strength and come and help him ! If the desire of his heart be to thy name, let all his enemies flee before him ! Art Thou not He who hast made him a father to the fatherless, a mighty deliverer to the oppressed ! Hast Thou not given him to be feet to the lame, hands to the helpless, eyes to the blind ? Hath he ever with-held his bread from the hungry, or hid his soul from his own flesh ? Then, whatever thou with-holdest from him, O thou lover of men, satisfy his soul with thy likeness : Renew his heart in the whole image of thy Christ ; purge his spirit from self-will, pride, vanity, and fill it with faith and love, gentleness and long-suffering. Let no guile ever be found in his mouth ; no injustice in his hands !—And among all your labours of love, it becomes me earnestly to entreat Him, that He will not forget those you have gone through for,

“ SIR,

“ Your obliged and obedient servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY ”

The attentive reader will see in this letter the spirit of the man, whose “*love many waters could not quench,*” and who never forgot the smallest benefit. His whole eventful life was of this complexion.

By Mr. Ingham, he also wrote to Dr. Bray’s associates, who had sent a parochial library to Savannah.\* It was ex-

\* Dr. Thomas Bray was born at Marton, in Shropshire, in the year 1656, and educated at Oxford. He was at length presented to the vicarage of Over-

pected of the ministers who received these libraries, that they should send an account to their benefactors, of the method they used in catechising the children, and instructing the youth of their respective parishes. That part of his letter was as follows :—“ Our general method of catechising, is this ; a young gentleman who came with me, teaches between thirty and forty children, to read, write, and cast accounts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechises the lowest class, and endeavours to fix something of what was said in their understandings, as well as in their memories. In the evening he instructs the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon, I catechise them all. The same I do, on Sunday before the evening-service : And in the church immediately after the second Lesson, a select number of them having repeated the catechism, and been examined in some part of it, I endeavour to explain at large, and enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

“ Some time after the evening-service, as many of my parishioners as desire it, meet at my house, (as they do also on Wednesday evening,) and spend about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number, mostly those who design to communicate the next day, meet here on Saturday evening ; and a few of these come to me on the other evenings, and pass half an hour in the same employment.”

March 4. Mr. Wesley wrote to the Trustees for Georgia, giving them an account of his expences from March 1, 1736, to March 1, 1737, which, deducting extraordinary expences for repairing the parsonage-house, journies to Frederica, &c., amounted for himself and Mr. Delamotte, to forty-four

Whitacre, in Warwickshire ; and in 1690, to the rectory of Sheldon, where he composed his *Catechetical Lectures*, which procured him such reputation, that Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, selected him as a proper person to model the infant church of Maryland ; and for that purpose he was invested with the office of Commissary.

pounds, four shillings and four pence. At the same time he accepted of the fifty pounds a year, sent by the Society for his maintenance, which, however, was in a manner forced upon him, as he had formed a resolution not to accept of it, saying his Fellowship was sufficient for him.\* On this occasion his brother Samuel expostulated with him, and shewed him, that, by refusing it, he might injure those who should come after him: And if he did not want it for himself, he might give it away in such manner as he thought proper. He at length yielded to the solicitations of the Society, and the advice of his friends.

This day, it appears, the intimacy between Mr. Wesley, and Miss Sophy, was finally broken off; and he refers to this circumstance in the following paragraph in his printed Journal: "From the direction I received from God this day, touching an affair of the last importance, I cannot but observe, as I have done many times before, the entire mistake of many good men, who assert, 'that God will not answer your prayer 'unless your heart be wholly resigned to his will.' My heart was not wholly resigned to his will; therefore I durst not depend on my own judgment: And for this very reason, I cried to him the more earnestly, to supply what was wanting in me. And I know, and am assured, that he heard my voice, and did send forth his light and his truth."

He proceeds in his private Journal, in reference to the same affair. "March 7. When I walked with Mr. Causton, to his country-lot, I plainly felt, that had God given me such a retirement, with the companion I desired, I should have forgot the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world. March 8. Miss Sophy engaged herself to Mr. Williamson,—and on Saturday, the 12th, they were married at Purrysburgh: This being the day which completed the

\* He thought differently afterwards. He did not think that either Mr. Fletcher, or Mr. Perronet, did well in not claiming their dues, as it tended to injure their successors. This also I know from himself.

year from my first speaking to her. What thou doest, O God, I know not now ; but I shall know hereafter." He wrote on this occasion to his brother Samuel, who tells him in his answer, "I am sorry you are disappointed in one match, because you are very unlikely to find another." He felt much ; but I must repeat, that he never did allow himself to *determine* on marriage. If he had, he would not have referred the question to the Moravian Brethren. He fully told me his mind, and added, "If I had been allowed to follow my own inclinations, it is highly probable you would never have seen me. The Lord ordered it better." It was not long, however, before he saw sufficient cause to be thankful, that Providence had not permitted him to choose for himself. He had frequent occasions of discovering, that Mrs. Williamson was not that strictly religious character which he had supposed. On one of these occasions, near three months after her marriage, he writes thus, "God has shewed me yet more of the greatness of my deliverance, by opening to me a new and unexpected scene of Miss Sophy's dissimulation. O never give me over to my own heart's desires ; nor let me follow my own imaginations !" The trial through which Mr. Wesley now passed, gave him a more perfect knowledge of his own heart, and of human nature in general, than he had before acquired. He still pursued his labours with unremitting diligence, and observed the greatest punctuality in answering the letters from his friends.

March 29, 1737. He wrote to Mrs. Chapman, a religious acquaintance in England, with whom he held a correspondence. This letter will fully shew his views of the happy religion of Christ. "True friendship," says he, "is doubtless stronger than death, else yours could never have subsisted still, in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us. In the last proof you gave of it, there are a few things which I think it lies on me to mention : As to the rest, my brother is the proper

person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

“You seem to apprehend, that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a sociable friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness\* and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavour to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure, but what is a hindrance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule: And I know no other, by which a sincere reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me; that I should enjoy every pleasure, that leads to my taking pleasure in him; and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that, as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it should be so: Therefore in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end, (of taking pleasure in God,) I do his will. Though therefore that pleasure be in some sense distinct from the love of God, yet is the taking of it by no means distinct from his will. No; you say yourself, ‘It is his will I should take it.’ And here indeed is the hinge of the question, which I had once occasion to state in a letter to you; and more largely in a sermon on the love of God. If you will read over those, I believe you will find, you differ from Mr. Law and me, in words only. You say, the pleasures

\* Softness is an equivocal term: But Mr. Wesley does not here mean effeminacy, which the Christian religion forbids, and which he always discouraged both by his words and actions. He uses the word as equivalent with *benignity*.

you plead for are distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why then they tend to it ; and those which are only thus distinct from it, no one excepts against. The whole of what he affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, there is one thing needful, to do the will of God, and his will is our sanctification ; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness. On this we are to fix our single eye, at all times, and in all places : For so did our Lord. This one thing we are to do ; for so did our fellow-servant Paul, after his example, ‘ *Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.*’ In other words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory ; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

“ I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness ; neither are any of those either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am and must be an example to my flock ; not indeed, in my prudential rules, but, in some measure, (if giving God the glory, I may dare to say so,) in my spirit, and life, and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding ; and still not one of them has been as yet entangled in any case of conscience which was not solved.\* And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more, the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinc-

\* Small knowledge they had, and needed no more :  
 Not many could read, but all could adore :  
 No aid from the college or school they receiv’d ;  
 Content with His knowledge in whom they believ’d.

CHARLES WESLEY on the *Primitive Christians*.

tions, for I exhort all—dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as he giveth me power, with the pure unmixed milk of his word. And those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace in peace and holiness: They grieve, it is true, for those who did run well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also be tempted; yet, through the mercy of God, they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means; this they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant careful use of all the means. And, if they keep in this way, with lowliness, patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing toward perfection too far. O may you and I carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit! Rejoice evermore! Pray without ceasing! In every thing give thanks! Do every thing in the name of the Lord Jesus! Abound more and more in all holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work!”—This was the Christian perfection which Mr. Wesley preached from first to last; but he attained to clearer views of the *way* of obtaining it—viz. by *faith*. All the particular graces above-mentioned are the *fruits of faith made perfect, and working by love*.

Before Mr. Wesley left Frederica, in January, 1737, where his brother had suffered so much, and where the opposition of some ill-minded and desperate persons rose to a degree of violence hardly credible, so that his life was in danger several times; the worst constructions, which malignity itself could invent, were put upon his actions, and reported as facts. It even seems, that the giving away his own private income in acts of charity was construed into embezzlement of the society's money. Mr. Wesley did not doubt but men capable of such baseness would represent the matter in this light to



the trustees. He, therefore, wrote to them on the subject, and received the following answer from Dr. Burton; which, as it shews the confidence the trustees had in his uprightness and integrity, and their approbation of his conduct, I shall insert.

“ GEORGIA OFFICE, *June 15th, 1737.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I communicated your letter to the Board this morning. We are surprised at your apprehensions of being charged with the very imputation of having embezzled any public or private monies. I cannot learn any ground for even suspicion of any thing of this kind. We never heard of any accusation: but, on the contrary, are persuaded both of your frugality and honesty. We beg you not to give weight to reports or private insinuations. The trustees have a high esteem of your good services, and, on all occasions, will give further encouragement; and would not have the express mention of the fifty pounds, (in lieu of the same sum, formerly advanced by the *Society for Propagation*,) so understood, as not to admit of enlargement upon proper occasions. I am ordered by all the members present to acquaint you of this, and to give you assurance of their approbation of your conduct, and readiness to assist you. The V Prov. of Eton has given you ten pounds, for your private use and doing works of charity. I have desired Mr. Oglethorpe to convey this to you in a private way. Mr. Whitefield will shortly, and by the next convenient opportunity, go over to Georgia. There are three hundred acres granted to the church in Frederica. Be not discouraged by any hasty insinuations; but hope the best while many labour for the best. In good time matters will bear a better face. God strengthen your hands, and give efficacy to your honest endeavours! In a former letter, I spoke my mind at large to you concerning many particulars. I am, in much haste at present,

“ Your affectionate friend,

“ J. BURTON.

“P S. My Lord Egmont gives his respects and kind wishes, and begs you not to be discouraged.”

Mr. Causton, the chief magistrate of Savannah, had hitherto not only shewn a decent civility towards Mr. Wesley, but even a friendly regard for him. This regard seemed to have increased during a fever he had in the end of June, in which Mr. Wesley attended him every day.

But, about this time, he saw it to be his duty to mention to Mrs. Williamson those things which he thought reprobable in her behaviour. At this she appeared extremely angry, saying, she did not expect such usage from him. He consulted his friend Mr. Spangenberg, on this occasion, to whom he engaged, that, God being his helper, he would behave to all, rich or poor, friends or enemies, without respect of persons.

August 7. Mr. Wesley, having spoken to her in vain, repelled Mrs. Williamson from the holy communion, for the reasons specified in his letter of the 5th of July, as well as for not giving him notice of her design to communicate, after having discontinued it for some time. On the 9th, a warrant having been issued and served upon him, he was carried before the Recorder and Magistrates. Mr. Williamson's charge was—(1.) That Mr. Wesley had defamed his wife. (2.) That he had causelessly repelled her from the holy communion.—The first charge Mr. Wesley denied; and the second being purely ecclesiastical, he would not acknowledge the magistrates' power to interrogate him concerning it. He was told, that he must, however, appear at the next Court holden for Savannah. In the mean time, Mr. Causton, having now become Mr. Wesley's bitter enemy, required him to assign his reasons in writing for repelling his niece. This he accordingly did, by producing the following letter, written to Mrs. Williamson: “At Mr. Causton's request, I write once more. The rules whereby I proceed are these: *So many as intend to partake of the holy communion, shall signify their names*

to the Curate, at least some time the day before.—This you did not do.

*“ And if any of these have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the Curate shall advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord’s table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented.*

“ If you offer yourself at the Lord’s table on Sunday, I will advertise you, as I have done more than once, wherein you have done wrong; and when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God.”

On the 12th of August and the following days, Mr. Causton read to as many as he conveniently could, all the letters Mr. Wesley had written to himself or Miss Sophy from the beginning of their acquaintance; not, indeed, throughout, but selecting certain passages, which might, being detached from the rest, and aided by a comment which he supplied, make an impression to Mr. Wesley’s disadvantage.—While Mr. Causton was thus employed, the rest of the family were assiduous in their endeavours to convince all to whom they spake, that Mr. Wesley had repelled Mrs. Williamson from the communion out of revenge, because she had refused to marry him. “ I sat still at home,” says Mr. Wesley, “ and, I thank God, easy, having committed my cause to Him; and remembering his word, *‘ Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.’* I was at first afraid, that those who were weak in the faith would be turned out of the way, at least so far as to neglect the public worship, by attending which they were likely to suffer in their temporal concerns. But I feared where no fear was: God took care of this likewise, insomuch that on Sunday, the 14th, more were present at the morning prayers, than had been for some months before. Many of

them observed those words in the first lesson, ‘*Set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial before him, to bear witness against him.*’ No less remarkable were those in the evening lesson, ‘*I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.*’ O may I ever be able to say with Micaiah, ‘*What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak;*’ and that, though I too should be put into prison, and fed there ‘*with bread of affliction and with water of affliction.*’”

August 16. At the request of several of the communicants, he drew up a short relation of the case, and read it after the evening prayers in the open congregation. And this evening, as Mr. Wesley supposed, Mrs. Williamson was prevailed upon to swear to, and sign a paper, containing many assertions and insinuations injurious to his character.—During the whole of this week, Mr. Causton was employed in preparing those who were to form the Grand Jury at the next Court-day. He was talking with some or other of them day and night: His table was free to all: Old misunderstandings were forgotten, and nothing was too much to be done for them or promised to them.—Monday, the 22d, the Court was formed, and forty-four Jurors were sworn in, instead of fifteen, to be a Grand Jury to find the bills. This was done by Mr. Causton, who hereby shewed his skill in the management of a controversy like this. He knew well, that numbers would add weight to every thing they transacted, and induce them to take bolder steps, than a few would venture upon. To this Grand Jury he gave a long and earnest charge, *to beware of spiritual tyranny, and to oppose the new illegal authority, which was usurped over their consciences.* Mrs. Williamson’s affidavit was read; and he then delivered to them a paper, entitled “A List of Grievances, presented by the Grand Jury for Savannah, this — day of August, 1737.” In the afternoon Mrs. Williamson was examined, who acknowledged that she had no objections to make against Mr. Wesley’s conduct before her marriage. The next day, Mr. and after-

wards Mrs. Causton were also examined. The latter confessed, that it was by her request Mr. Wesley had written to Mrs. Williamson on the 5th of July; and Mr. Causton declared, that if Mr. Wesley had asked his consent to have married his niece, he should not have refused it.\*—The Grand Jury continued to examine these ecclesiastical grievances, which occasioned warm debates, till Thursday; when Mr. Causton, being informed they were entered on matters beyond his instructions, went to them, and behaved in such a manner, that he turned forty-two out of the forty-four into a fixed resolution to inquire into his whole behaviour. They immediately entered on that business, and continued examining witnesses all day on Friday. On Saturday, Mr. Causton finding all his efforts to stop them ineffectual, adjourned the Court till Thursday, the 1st of September, and spared no pains, in the mean time, to bring them to another mind.

September 1. Mr. Causton so far prevailed, that the majority of the Grand Jury returned the list of grievances to the Court, (in some particulars altered,) under the form of two presentments, containing ten bills, only two of which related to the affair of Mrs. Williamson; and only one of these was cognizable by that Court, the rest being merely ecclesiastical.

September 2. Mr. Wesley addressed the Court to this effect: “As to nine of the ten indictments against me, I know this Court can take no cognizance of them; they being matters of an ecclesiastical nature, and this not an ecclesiastical Court. But the tenth, concerning my speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson, is of a secular nature; and this, therefore, I desire may be tried here, where the facts complained of were committed.” Little answer was made, and that purely evasive.

In the afternoon he moved the court again, for an immediate trial at Savannah; adding, “That those who are offended

\* But the attachment never came to that.

may clearly see whether I have done any wrong to any one ; or whether I have not rather deserved the thanks of Mrs. Williamson, Mr. Causton, and of the whole family." Mr. Causton's answer was full of civility and respect. He observed, " Perhaps things would not have been carried so far, had you not said, you believed if Mr. Causton appeared, the people would tear him in pieces ; not so much out of love to you, as out of hatred to him for his abominable practices."

It is hardly possible to believe that Mr. Wesley spoke thus. He had views of religion that would not suffer him to do so. But we too often find in disputes, that the constructions of others on what has been said, are reported as the very words which have been spoken. Mr. Causton sufficiently discovered the motives that influenced his conduct in this business.

Twelve of the grand jurors now drew up a protest against the proceedings of the majority, to be immediately sent to the trustees in England. In this paper they gave such clear and satisfactory reasons, under every bill, for their dissent from the majority, as effectually did away all just ground of complaint against Mr. Wesley, on the subjects of the prosecution ;—but as Mr. and Mrs. Williamson intended to proceed to England in the first ship that should sail, some of Mr. Wesley's friends thought, he ought to go likewise ; chiefly to prevent or remove the bad impressions, which misrepresentations and ill-natured report might make on the trustees and others, interested in the welfare of the colony. But, September 10th, he observes, " I laid aside the thoughts of going to England ; thinking it more suitable to my calling, still to commit my cause to God, and not to be in haste to justify myself : only, *'to be always ready to give to any one that should ask me, a reason of the hope that is in me.'*"

Very different, however, were the spirit and the proceedings of the magistrates of Savannah. They sent the affidavit they had procured, and the two presentments of the grand jury, to be inserted in the news-papers in different parts of

America. The only purpose this could answer was, to injure Mr. Wesley in the opinion of a large body of people, who could not easily come at a true knowledge of the case. That these advertisements might make a deeper impression on the minds of the multitude, the pomp of legal form was preserved; the following words being added at the end of each bill, “CONTRARY TO THE PEACE OF OUR SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING, HIS CROWN AND DIGNITY.” Persons of discernment saw through the artifice, and in the end of September, Mr. Wesley received a letter from a gentleman of considerable station and learning in Charlestown, in which are the following observations. “I am much concerned at some reports and papers concerning you from Georgia. The papers contain some affidavits made against you, by one Mrs. Williamson; and a parcel of stuff called presentments of you by the grand jury, for matters chiefly of your mere office as a clergyman. Has our Sovereign Lord the King given the temporal courts in Georgia ecclesiastical jurisdiction? If he has not, then sure I am, that, whatever your failings in your office may be, a grand jury’s presentments of them, being repugnant to the fundamental laws and constitution of England, is a plain ‘breach of his peace,’ and an open insult on ‘His Crown and Dignity;’ for which they themselves ought to be presented, if they have not incurred a *premunire*. \* The presentments, (a sad pack of nonsense,) I have seen; but not the affidavits. They were both designed to have been published in our Gazette, but our friends here have hitherto prevented it.—I shall be glad to have some light from yourself into these matters, and wherewith to oppose the reports industriously spread here to your disadvantage; meantime, I remain,

“Your most obedient humble servant,

“S. GARDEN.”

\* To incur a *premunire*, is to be liable to imprisonment and loss of goods.

Mr. Wesley also received some consolatory letters from those of his friends, to whom he had represented his situation. A letter of this kind, from Dr. Cutler, a clergyman at Boston, contains some thoughts not very commonly to be met with; and I think it, therefore, worthy of a place here. It is dated the twenty-second of October. “I am sorry, Sir,” says he, “for the clouds hanging over your mind, respecting your undertaking and situation; but hope God will give an happy increase to that good seed you have planted and watered, according to his will. The best of men, in all ages, have failed in the success of their labour; and there will ever be found too many enemies to the cross of Christ; for earth will not be heaven. This reminds us of that happy place, where we shall not see and be grieved for transgressors; and where, for our well-meant labours, our judgment is with the Lord, and our reward with our God. And you well know, Sir, that, under the saddest appearances, we may have some share in the consolations which God gave Elijah; and may trust in him, that there is some wickedness we repress or prevent; some goodness by our means, weak and unworthy as we are, beginning and increasing in the hearts of men, at present; perhaps like a grain of mustard-seed, that in God’s time may put forth, and spread, and flourish: and that, if the world seems not the better for us, it might be worse without us. Our low opinion of ourselves is a preparative to these successes; and so the modest and great Apostle found it.

“No doubt, Sir, you have temptations where you are, nor is there any retreat from them; they hint to us the care we must take, and the promises we must apply to; and *“blessed is the man that endureth temptation.”*

“I rejoice in the good character you give, which I believe you well bestow, of Mr. Whitefield, who is coming to you—but I question not but his labours will be better joined with,



than supersede yours; and even his, and all our sufficiency and efficiency is of God.

“ It is the least we can do, to pray for one another; and if God will hear me, a great sinner, it will strengthen your interest in him. I recommend myself to a share in your prayers, for his pardon, acceptance, and assistance; and beg that my family may not be forgotten by you.”

Mr. Wesley, in the midst of this storm kept up by the arts of his avowed enemies, without a shilling in his pocket, and three thousand miles from home, possessed his soul in peace, and pursued his labours with the same unremitting diligence, as if he had enjoyed the greatest tranquility and ease.

October 30.—He gives us an account of his labours on the Lord’s-day. “ The English service lasted from five till half an hour past six. The Italian (with a few Vaudois,) began at nine. The second service for the English, including the sermon and the holy Communion, continued from half an hour past ten, till about half an hour past twelve. The French service began at one. At two I catechised the children. About three began the English service. After this was ended, I joined with as many as my large room would hold, in reading, prayer, and singing. And about six the service of the Germans began; at which I was glad to be present, not as a teacher, but as a learner.”

November 1.—He received a temporary relief from his pressing wants. “ Col. Stephens,” says he, “ arrived, by whom I received a benefaction of ten pounds sterling; \* after having been for several months without one shilling in the house, but not without peace, health, and contentment.”

November 3.—He attended the court holden on that day: and again at the court held on the twenty-third; urging an immediate hearing of his case, that he might have an oppor-

\* Probably the ten pounds mentioned in Dr. Burton’s letter, the 15th of June.

tunity of answering the charges alleged against him. But this the magistrates refused, and at the same time countenanced every report to his disadvantage; whether it were a mere invention, or founded on a malicious construction of any thing he did or said. Mr. Wesley perceiving that he had not the most distant prospect of obtaining justice, that he was in a place where those in power were combined together to oppress him, and could any day procure evidence, (as experience had shewn,) of words he had never spoken, and of actions he had never done; being disappointed too, in the primary object of his mission, preaching to the Indians; he consulted with his friends what he ought to do: who were of opinion with him, that, by these circumstances Providence did now call him to leave Savannah. The next day he called on Mr. Causton, and told him he designed to set out for England immediately. Nov. 24, he put up the following advertisement in the great square, and quietly prepared for his journey

“Whereas John Wesley designs shortly to set out for England, This is to desire those who have borrowed any books of him, to return them as soon as they conveniently can, to

“JOHN WESLEY.”

This indeed was an event which the magistrates most ardently wished to take place, and to which all their proceedings had been directed. It is no objection to this opinion, that they published an order to prohibit him from leaving the province. It is manifest, that they had no intention of bringing the matter to a fair hearing, and of giving it a legal decision. They knew well, that the evidence was so strong in Mr. Wesley's favour, that they could not even invent a plausible pretence for giving the cause against him. But to give it in his favour would have been cause of rejoicing to him and his friends, and they had no way of preventing this, but by delaying the trial as long as possible. On the other

hand, they easily foresaw, that if by cutting off all prospect of terminating the affair, and multiplying false and injurious reports concerning him every day, they might weary out his patience, and induce him to quit the province of his own accord, the triumph would be left to his enemies; and he, leaving the province pending a prosecution against him, and in opposition to a prohibition of the magistrates, would make his conduct and character suspected among all those who did not know the circumstances of the case. Finding him now determined to sail for England, they had an opportunity of giving their plan its full effect.

Mr. Wesley intended to set out about noon, the tide then serving; but about ten o'clock the magistrates sent for him, and told him he should not go out of the province, till he had entered into recognizance to appear at the court, and answer the allegations laid against him. Mr. Wesley replied, that he had appeared at six courts successively, and had openly desired a trial, but was refused it. They said that he must however give security to appear again. He asked, what security? After a long consultation together, they agreed upon a kind of bond, that he should appear at Savannah, when required, under a penalty of fifty pounds. But the Recorder added, you must likewise give bail to answer Mr. Williamson's action of one thousand pounds damages. "I then began," says Mr. Wesley, "to see into their design, of spinning out time and doing nothing; and so told him plainly, Sir, I will sign neither the one bond nor the other; you know your business, and I know mine."

Finding him quite determined, the magistrates saw their plan was secure, and that they might safely keep up appearances in their own favour, without danger of disappointment. In the afternoon, therefore, they published an order, requiring all officers to prevent his going out of the province, and forbidding any person to assist him so to do. The day was now far spent: After evening prayers, therefore, the tide again

serving, Mr. Wesley left Savannah, in company with three other persons, no one attempting to hinder him. There can be no doubt, but the magistrates were heartily glad to get rid of a man, whose whole manner of life was a constant reproof of their licentiousness, and whose words were as arrows sticking fast in them.

Mr. Wesley's constant rule, from which he could not swerve with a pure conscience, was, to ascertain that line of conduct which duty required him to pursue as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, and then steadily to walk in it, regardless of consequences. And there is every evidence which the case will admit, that he acted in this conscientious manner towards Mrs. Williamson. It does not appear, that any one ever charged him with repelling her from the Holy Communion out of revenge, because she would not marry him, except her relations, who now thought it necessary to injure his reputation as much as possible, to cover themselves from reproach. But this charge not only wants positive proof; it is even destitute of probability. It was about five months after her marriage when this circumstance happened, during the former part of which time he had frequently administered the sacrament to her, without shewing any symptoms of resentment: And about three months after her marriage, he saw such things in her conduct, (noted in his private *Journal*, *which was never printed*,) as induced him to bless God for his deliverance in not marrying her.

In his pastoral character, Mr. Wesley acted by one rule towards all the communicants, remembering that word of St. James,—*If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin.* If any one had discontinued his attendance at the Lord's table, he required him to signify his name some time the day before he intended to communicate again: And if any one had done wrong to his neighbour, so that the congregation was thereby offended, he required him openly to declare that he had

repented. This rule the order of the Church of England required him to observe, and he acted by it invariably in all cases, whether the persons were rich or poor, friends or enemies. Mrs. Williamson did not conform to this established order, which must have been well known to all the communicants in so small a place. Mr. Wesley was, therefore, reduced to this alternative, either to break an order he held sacred, in her favour, and thereby incur the censure of a blamable partiality for her, after being married to another ; or to repel her from the Holy Communion. Censure was inevitable, which ever way he had acted, considering the malice of her relatives. Having well considered the matter, therefore, he determined to follow the rule he had always observed, and to leave the consequences to God.

Mr. Wesley enjoyed a wonderful state of health while in America. His constitution seemed to improve under the hardships he endured, which appeared sufficient to have weakened or destroyed the strongest man. Three hundred acres having been set apart at Savannah for glebe land, he took from it what he thought sufficient for a good garden, and here he frequently worked with his own hands. He continued his custom of eating little, of sleeping less, and of leaving not a moment of his time unemployed. He exposed himself with the utmost indifference to every change of season, and to all kinds of weather. On one of these occasions he concludes, that any person might undergo the same hardship without injury, if his constitution were not impaired by the softness of a genteel education. Dr. Whitehead observes upon this: " In all Mr. Wesley's writings, I do not know such a flagrant instance of false reasoning as this. Contrary to all the rules of logic, he draws a general conclusion from particular premises ;—but who is, at all times, in full possession of the powers of his own mind ?" Whatever becomes of the *opinion*, which I would not dispute with a Doctor, the logic is good,

for the premises are not *particular*. All those whose constitutions are not thus hurt, are included. Mr. Wesley, therefore, as a logician, does not need the Doctor's apology.

Mr. Wesley and his three companions suffered great hardships in travelling from Purrysburg to Port Royal. Not being able to procure a guide, they set out an hour before sun-rise without one. The consequence was, they lost their way; and wandered in the woods till evening, without any food but part of a gingerbread cake divided among them, and without a drop of water. At night, two of the company dug with their hands about three feet deep, and found water, with which they were refreshed. They lay down together on the ground, (in December,) "And I, at least," says Mr. Wesley, "slept till near six in the morning." They rose, took the rest of the gingerbread cake, and wandered on till between one and two o'clock, before they came to any house, or obtained any further refreshment.—December 6, after many difficulties and delays, they came to Port Royal, and the next day walked to Beaufort, on the opposite side of the island. Here Mr. Jones, the minister of the place, invited Mr. Wesley to his house, and gave him, as he acknowledges, a lively idea of the old English hospitality. Mr. Wesley adds, in his private Journal, "Yet observing the elegance, and more than neatness of every thing about him, I could not but sigh to myself, and say, *Hæu delicatum discipulum duri Magistri!*"\* Perhaps, this remark was more in the Mystic than in the Christian style; and, to adopt the language which Mr. Wesley sometimes used, he was severely reprov'd for it, shortly after, being almost refused the necessaries of life.

On the the 9th, Mr. Delamotte having come to him, they took boat for Charlestown; but the wind being contrary, and provisions falling short, they were obliged on the 11th to land at a plantation to get some refreshment. The people were unwilling to let them have any: At length, however, they

\* Alas, for the delicate disciple of a Master that endured all hardness!

gave them some bad potatoes, “ of which,” says Mr. Wesley, “ they plainly told us we robbed the swine.”—The wind continued contrary, and they in want of every thing ; till about noon, on the 12th, having reached John’s Island, they desired a Mr. G. to let them have a little meat or drink of any sort, either with or without price. With much difficulty, he tells us, they obtained some potatoes, and liberty to roast them in a fire his negroes had made at a distance from the house.

Mr. Wesley proceeds : “ Early on Tuesday, December 13, we came to Charlestown, where I expected trials of a quite different nature and more dangerous ; contempt and hunger being easy to be borne ; but who can bear respect and fulness of bread ?” \* On the 16th, he parted from his faithful friend, Mr. Delamotte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from England. On the 22d, he took his leave of America, after having preached the Gospel, as he observes, in Savannah, “ not as he ought, but as he was able, for one year and nearly nine months.”

“ Such was the leave,” says Mr. Hampson, “ which our Missionary,” (how respectful in a man who owed, under God, his all to him ! ) “ took of America.” I scruple not to say, (and I think that every reader who candidly considers the whole account, will say,) such was the treatment that a man of God received from those, whose best interests he endeavoured to promote ! But though “ *clouds and darkness are around his throne,*” who governs the world, “ *yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat.*” Such a burning and shining light was not to be hidden in the then uncultivated wilds of Georgia. He who had *sold all* for God and his truth, and who was fitted to defend that truth against all the deceivableness of the carnal mind, with all its additional weapons of vain philosophy, or worldly prudence, was called to act in a very different sphere. And though permitted by

\* Those who have *faith*, and who abide therein.

the only wise God our Saviour, to be “*sifted as wheat*,” and tried in the furnace of adversity, he was preserved and brought forth as gold, which

“Returns more pure, and brings forth all its weight.”

Divine Providence was about to lead him into a field of action, in which every gift that God had given him, was tried to the uttermost, and “*was found unto praise, and honour, and glory*.”



### CHAPTER III.

MR. WESLEY'S RETURN TO ENGLAND, AND ATTAINING, WITH  
HIS BROTHER, THE TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

IN the beginning of the following May, Mr. Whitefield arrived at Savannah, where he found some serious persons, the fruits of Mr. Wesley's ministry, glad to receive him. He had now an opportunity of inquiring upon the spot, into the circumstances of the late disputes, and bears testimony to the ill usage Mr. Wesley had received; but adds, he thought it most prudent not to repeat grievances.\* When he was at Charlestown, Mr. Garden acquainted him with the ill treatment Mr. Wesley had met with, and assured him, that, were the same arbitrary proceedings to commence against him, he would defend him with life and fortune.† These testimonies, of persons so respectable, and capable of knowing all the circumstances of the affair, co-incide with the general tendency of the statement above given; and, with candid persons, must do away all suspicions, with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct.

During his voyage to England, Mr. Wesley entered into a close and severe examination of himself, and recorded the result with the greatest openness. January 8, 1738, in the fulness of his heart he writes thus: "By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling, ‡ I am convinced, (1.) Of unbelief;

\* ROBERT'S Narrative of the Life of Mr. George Whitefield, page 56.

† Ibid. page 58.

‡ While Mr. Wesley afterwards contended with the world for the faith, this expression was brought forward by his opponents to prove, in their way, that Mr. Wesley set inward feeling above scripture, reason, and all evidence! By "inward feeling" he evidently means consciousness. How otherwise could he be convinced of *his own particular state*?

having no such faith in Christ, as will prevent my heart from being troubled.—(2.) Of pride, throughout my life past; inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not. (3.) Of gross irrecollection; inasmuch as, in a storm I cry to God every moment; in a calm, not. (4.) Of levity and luxuriandy of spirit,—appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most, by my manner of speaking of my enemies.—Lord, save, or I perish! Save me, (1.) By such a faith as implies peace in life and death. (2.) By such humility, as may fill my heart from this hour for ever, with a piercing uninterrupted sense, *Nihil est quod hactenus feci*, that *hitherto I have done nothing*. (3.) By such a recollection as may enable me to cry to thee, every moment. (4.) By steadiness, seriousness, *σεμνολία*, *sobriety of spirit*, avoiding as fire, every word that tendeth not to edifying, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face.”\*

January 13. They had a thorough storm.—On the 24th, being about 160 leagues from the Land’s-end, he observes, his mind was full of thought, and he wrote as follows: “I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? Who is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion; I can talk well, nay, and believe myself while no danger is near: But let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, ‘*To die is gain!*’

“I have a sin of fear, that when I’ve spun

“My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!”

“I think verily if the Gospel be true, I am safe—I now believe the Gospel is true. ‘*I shew my faith by my works,*’ by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever

\* He now more deeply than ever felt the want of faith, even when he was conscious that he had not *wickedly departed from his God*.

sees me, sees I would be a Christian. Therefore '*are my ways not like other men's ways.*' Therefore I have been, I am, I am content to be, '*a bye-word, a proverb of reproach.*' But in a storm I think, What, if the gospel be not true; then thou art of all men most foolish,—O who will deliver me from this fear of death! What shall I do? Where shall I fly from it?" The next day, Jan. 25. he took a review of his religious principles on a few important points; and in a private paper wrote as follows:

"1. For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, '*What must I do to be saved?*' The Scripture answered, '*keep the commandments,*' believe, hope, love: follow after these tempers till thou hast fully attained, that is, till death; by all those outward works and means which God hath appointed; by walking as Christ walked.

"2. I was early warned against laying, as the Papists do, too much stress on outward works, or on a faith without works, which, as it does not include, so it will never lead to true hope or charity. Nor am I sensible, that to this hour I have laid too much stress on either; having from the very beginning valued both faith, and the means of grace, and good works, not on their own account, but, as believing God, who had appointed them, would by them bring me in due time to the mind that was in Christ.

"3. But before God's time was come, I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, whose confused and indigested accounts, magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it quite hid all the rest of the commandments. I did not then see, that this was the natural effect of their over-grown fear of Popery: Being so terrified with the cry of merit and good works, that they plunged at once into the other extreme. In this labyrinth I was utterly lost; not being able to find out what the error was; nor yet to reconcile this uncouth hypothesis, either with Scripture or common sense.

“ 4. The English writers, such as Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Taylor, and Mr. Nelson, a little relieved me from these well-meaning, wrong-headed Germans. Their accounts of Christianity, I could easily see to be, in the main, consistent both with reason and Scripture. Only when they interpreted Scripture in different ways, I was often much at a loss. And again, there was one thing much insisted on in Scripture, the unity of the church, which none of them, I thought, clearly explained, or strongly inculcated.

“ 5. But it was not long before Providence brought me to those, who shewed me a sure rule of interpreting Scripture ; viz. *Consensus Veterum*: ‘ *Quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper creditum.*’\* At the same time they sufficiently insisted upon a due regard to the one church, at all times, and in all places. Nor was it long before I bent the bow too far the other way: (1.) By making antiquity a co-ordinate, rather than sub-ordinate, rule with Scripture. (2.) By admitting several doubtful writings, as undoubted evidences of antiquity. (3.) By extending antiquity too far, even to the middle or end of the fourth century. (4.) By believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient church, than ever were so. (5.) By not considering, that the Decrees of one Provincial Synod could bind only that Province; and that the Decrees of a general Synod, only those provinces whose representatives met therein. (6.) By not considering, that the most of those Decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions; and consequently, when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces.

“ 6. These considerations insensibly stole upon me, as I grew acquainted with the Mystic writers; whose noble descriptions of union with God, and internal religion, made every thing else appear mean, flat, and insipid. But in truth they made good works appear so too; yea, and faith itself, and

\* The general consent of antiquity: That which was believed in every place, by all the Churches, and at all times.

what not? These gave me an entire new view of religion; nothing like any I had before. But alas! it was nothing like that religion which Christ and his apostles lived and taught. I had a plenary dispensation from all the commands of God: The form ran thus, ‘Love is all; all the commands beside, are only means of love: You must choose those which you feel are means to you, and use them as long as they are so.’ Thus were all the bands burst at once. And though I could never fully come into this, nor contentedly omit what God enjoined; yet, I know not how, I fluctuated between obedience and disobedience. I had no heart, no vigour, no zeal in obeying; continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements. Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account, how, or when, I came a little back toward the right way: Only my present sense is this—all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers: The Mystics are the most dangerous of its enemies. They stab it in the vitals; and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them. May I praise Him who hath snatched me out of this fire likewise, by warning all others, that it is set on fire of hell.”

The censure Mr. Wesley has here passed on the Mystic writers, is too severe, as he afterwards acknowledged. What the moderate Mystics have said on the union of the soul with God, is in general excellent, and better said by them, than by most other writers. But they do not sufficiently insist on the atonement and mediation of Christ, as the only foundation of a sinner’s union with God: Nor do they in general hold the scriptural method of attaining it. The sincere therefore are always in bondage.—Those that are not so, “*trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others.*”

January 29, 1738. They once more saw English land: And Feb. 1, Mr. Wesley landed at Deal; where he was informed Mr. Whitefield had sailed the day before, for Georgia. He read prayers, and explained a portion of Scripture to a large

company at the inn ; and, on the third, arrived safe in London.

Previous to his arrival in England, he entered more fully into a close examination of himself, and “*searched out his spirit*” in the light which those late remarkable providences afforded him. The Lord had now given him abundant means of self-knowledge, and they were not lost upon him. He more than ever felt what he had subscribed to at his ordination, that he was “far gone from original righteousness,” and “*had fallen short of the glory of God,*” that glorious image of God, in which man was at first created. He had felt much of this in the late trials through which he passed. He had weighed himself in the balance of the sanctuary, the word of God ; and had attentively marked the lively victorious faith of more experienced christians. “And now,” says he, “it is upwards of two years since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of christianity ; but what have I learned myself in the mean time ? Why, (what I least of all suspected,) that I who went to America, to convert others, was never converted myself. ‘*I am not mad,*’ though I thus speak : but ‘*speak the words of truth and soberness ;*’ if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see, that as I am, so are they.

“Are they read in philosophy ? So was I. In ancient or modern tongues ? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity ? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things ? The very same I could do. Are they plenteous in alms ? Behold, I give all my goods to feed the poor.

“Do they give of their labour as well as their substance ? I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren ? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country ; I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands ; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed

by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this, (be it more or less, it matters not,) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can know, say, give, do, or suffer, justify me in his sight? Yea, or the constant use of all the means of grace? (which nevertheless is meet, right, and our bounden duty,) or that I know nothing of myself, that I am as touching outward, moral righteousness blameless? Or, (to come closer yet,) the having a rational conviction of all the truths of Christianity? Does all this give a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by '*the law and the testimony*;' all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ, they are holy, and just and good, yet without it are '*dung and dross*.'

" This then have I learned in the ends of the earth, that I am '*fallen short of the glory of God*;' that my whole heart is '*altogether corrupt and abominable*,' and consequently my whole life, (seeing it cannot be, that '*an evil tree*' should '*bring forth good fruit*;' ) that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which '*are more in number than the hairs of my head*,' that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide his righteous judgment; that having the sentence of death in my heart, and having nothing in or of myself, to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely, '*through the redemption that is in Jesus*;' I have no hope, but that if I seek I shall find the Christ, and '*be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*.'

" If it be said, that I have faith, (for many such things have I heard, from many miserable comforters,) I answer, so have the devils,—*a sort of faith*; but still they are strangers

to the covenant of promise. So the apostles had even at Cana in Galilee, when Jesus first *'manifested forth his glory ;'* even then they, in a sort, *'believed on him ;'* but they had not then *'the faith that overcometh the world.'* The faith I want is, *'a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God.'* I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans : That faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, *'I live not ; but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'* I want that faith which none has, without knowing that he hath it, (though many imagine they have it, who have it not,) for whosoever hath it, is *'freed from sin, the whole body of sin is destroyed'* in him : He is freed from fear, *'having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.'* And he is freed from doubt, *'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him ; which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.'* "

He observes, however, " Many reasons I have to bless God,—for my having been carried into that strange land, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby I trust he hath, in some measure, *'humbled me, and proved me, and shewn me what was in my heart.'* Hereby I have been taught to *'beware of men.'*—Hereby God has given me to know many of his servants, particularly those of the church of Hernhuti. Hereby my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues. All in Georgia have heard the word of God : Some have believed and began to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings both to the African and American heathens. Many children have learned *how they ought to serve God,* and to be useful to their neighbour. And those whom it most concerns, have an opportunity of knowing the state of



their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations."

After waiting on General Oglethorpe, and on the trustees of Georgia, he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a Missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the Indians in America. The churches where he preached, were crowded. This soon produced a complaint, that there was no room "for the best in the parish:" and that objection, united to the offence which was given by his plain heart-searching sermons, produced in each place at last the following repulsion, "Sir, you must preach here no more."

That Mr. Wesley had not the true Christian faith, is manifest; for he had not that deliverance from the fear of death, nor victory over all sin, which are the fruits of that faith. He does not seem to have had any immediate reference to that faith which he afterwards experienced and taught; for as yet he did not understand it. When the first Journal, in which this is said, was printed in his works, in 1774, he doubted whether the severe sentence he here pronounced upon himself, was just. He then believed, that when he went to America, he had the faith of a *servant*, though not of a *son*. Though he was far from being singular in making this distinction, yet the propriety of it has been doubted, and sometimes even denied.

The distinction is founded on what the Apostle has said, Rom. viii. 15. and further illustrated and confirmed, Gal. iv. 1—7. Mr. Wesley observes in a note on Rom. viii. 15. that "‘*The Spirit of bondage*’ here seems directly to mean, those operations of the Holy Spirit, by which the soul, on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to Satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God." He has printed a sermon on the same text, in which he explains it in the same way. He was not singular in this interpretation, as might easily be shewn from respectable authority. And all sound

Christian experience proves that the distinction is well founded. “*By the law*” only “*is the*” true “*knowledge of sin* ;” and without it those who admit the Christian revelation, are either Pharisees or Antinomians. But the sincere take Christ’s “*yoke upon them*,” as Mr. Wesley did ; and to them Christ “*gives rest*. *The spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death.*” To stop short of this liberty is, alas ! too common ; especially where religion so prevails as to become reputable. Mr. Wesley observes, in his Sermon on “*The Spirit of bondage and adoption*,” that the generality of those who are highly esteemed by men, live and die in that bondage. The devoted brothers were not content thus to live ; and hence, in the “*spirit of adoption*” to which they attained, they became “*the saviour of life*” to millions.

Mr. C. Wesley, to whom I now return, had been absent from England upwards of thirteen months. During this time, he had passed through an uncommon series of difficulties. In his distress, the scriptures became more precious than ever before : He felt a power in them, which nothing creaturely can convey ; and saw a beauty, which criticism never discovered. He was thus prepared to attend to the powerful, yet simple, way of salvation by faith, which the pride of man hath always rejected.

When he arrived in London, his friends received him with inexpressible joy ; a report having been spread, that the ship, in which he came home, had been seen to sink at sea. One lady he found, when he called upon her, who was reading an account of his death. After delivering his letters, he waited on his friend Mr. Charles Rivington, in St. Paul’s church-yard. Here he met with letters and a Journal from his brother in Georgia, which informed him of what had taken place soon after he left it. Before he quitted America, Mr. Charles Wesley had written a letter to his brother John, in which he had expressed his sentiments of some particular

persons with freedom; but, by way of caution, had pointed out two individuals by two Greek words. This letter Mr. John Wesley dropped, and it fell into the hands of those who were enemies to both of them. This was sure to raise great disturbance, among a people so irritable and so revengeful as the Georgians were at that time. Mr. Charles had happily escaped out of their reach, and the storm fell with a double violence on his brother.\* The Journal which he now received from Mr. Rivington, informed him of the particulars. "I read it," says Mr. Charles, "without either surprise or impatience. The dropping of my fatal letter, I hope, will convince him of what I never could, his own great carelessness; and the sufferings which it has brought upon him, *may shew him* his blindness. His simplicity in telling what and who were meant by the two Greek words, was out-doing his own out-doings. Surely all this will be sufficient to teach him a little of the wisdom of the serpent, of which he seems so entirely void."

It appears from Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal, that most of the trustees for Georgia were Dissenters. They have given us, however, an unequivocal proof, that the Dissenters, at this time, possessed great liberality of sentiment, or they would not have approved of the nomination of the two Mr. Wesleys, men avowedly of very High Church principles, to go and preach the Gospel in Georgia; especially as their father had been so public an opposer of the Dissenting interest.

December 7. One of these Trustees having called on Mr. C. Wesley, the latter observes, "We had much discourse of Georgia, and of my brother's persecution among that stiff-necked people. He seems a truly pious humble Christian, full of zeal for God and love to man."—Mr. Charles Wesley was then a rigid Churchman: It is, therefore, pleasing to

\* This was eight or nine months previous to the persecution he suffered on account of Mrs. Williamson.

find this testimony of his candid judgment of a Dissenter. It is not what opinion a man holds, but what spirit he is of, that is the great question.

Mr. Oglethorpe sailed for England on the 26th of November, and arrived in London on the 7th of January, 1757. Mr. Charles Wesley waited upon him the next day, and the most cordial friendship continued from that time between them till his death.

About the middle of January, Count Zinzendorff arrived in England. One principal object of this visit seems to have been, to get the Moravian Church and the Church of England in Georgia, acknowledged as one Church. The Count had been informed of the piety and zeal of the two brothers: and, on the 19th, a few days after his arrival, he sent for Mr. Charles Wesley, who was received by the Count with all possible affection. Here he became acquainted with the object of the Count's visit to this country. From him he went to the Bishop of Oxford, who received him with equal kindness, and desired him to call as often as he could, without ceremony or further invitation. They had much talk of the state of religion among the Moravians, and of the object of the Count's visit; and the Bishop acknowledged, that the Moravian Bishops had the true succession. Here we see a reason of the two brothers' willingness to join the Moravians.

On the 26th, being near Twickenham, on a visit to Dr Hales, who was one of the Trustees for Georgia, Mr. C Wesley, the next day, took a walk to see Mr. Pope's house and gardens; "justly," he observes, "called a burlesque on human greatness." He adds, "I was sensibly affected with the plain Latin sentence on the obelisk, in memory of his mother.—*Ah Editha, Matram optima, Mulierum amantissima, vale!*\* How far superior to the most laboured elegy

\* Ah Editha, the best of mothers, the most loving of women, farewell!

which he, or Prior himself, could have composed !"—I mention this as one proof of his fine classical taste.

As Georgia was supposed to be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, Mr. C. Wesley took an early opportunity of waiting on his Lordship with the Count's proposition : But the Bishop refused to meddle in that business. He waited again on the Bishop of Oxford, and informed him, the Bishop of London declined having any thing to do with Georgia, alleging, that it belonged to the Archbishop to unite the Moravians with the English Church. He replied, that it was the Bishop of London's proper office. " He bid me," adds Mr. Wesley, " assure the Count, we should acknowledge the Moravians as our brethren, and one Church with us." The Count seemed resolved to carry his people from Georgia, if they might not be permitted to preach to the Indians. He was also very desirous to take Mr. Charles Wesley with him into Germany.

In August, Mr. C. Wesley was requested to carry up the Address, from the University of Oxford, to his Majesty. Accordingly, on the 26th, he waited on the King with the Address, at Hampton Court, accompanied with a few friends. They were graciously received ; and the Archbishop told him, he was glad to see him there. They kissed their Majesties' hands, and were invited to dinner. Mr. Wesley left the dinner and the company, and hasted back to town. The next day, he waited on his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and dined at St. James's. So we see he was still an honourable man. But he was not satisfied with his present state. On the 31st of August, he consulted Mr. Law ; the sum of whose advice was, " Renounce yourself, and be not impatient." This was very good advice, in order to *wait for faith* ; but very bad, if to rest without it. In the beginning of September, he consulted him again, and asked several questions, to which Mr. Law gave the following answers : " Q. With what comment shall I read the scriptures ? A. None.—Q. What do

you think of one who dies unrenewed while endeavouring after it? A. It neither concerns you to ask,\* nor me to answer.—Q. Shall I write once more to such a person? A. No.—Q. But I am persuaded it will do him good? A. Sir, I have told you my opinion.—Q. Shall I write to you? A. Nothing I can either speak or write will do you any good.”—Certainly not. He had attained to all that Mr. Law knew, and fully practised it.

To oblige Mr. Oglethorpe, Mr. C. Wesley still held his office of Secretary, and had even formed a resolution to return to Georgia. About the middle of October, he was informed at the office, that he must sail in three weeks. His mother vehemently protested against his going back to America; but this did not alter his resolution.

In the beginning of February, 1738, about the time Mr. John Wesley returned from Georgia, Peter Boehler arrived in England. He soon became acquainted with the two brothers, and, on the 20th of this month, prevailed with Mr. Charles Wesley to assist him in learning English. He was now at Oxford, and Boehler soon entered into some close conversation with him, and with some scholars who were serious, and who could converse in Latin. He pressed upon them the necessity of Gospel faith: He shewed them, that many who had been awakened had fallen asleep again, for want of attaining to it. He spoke much of the necessity of prayer and faith, but none of them seemed to understand him.

Mr. Charles Wesley was, immediately after this, taken ill of a pleurisy. On the 24th, the pain became so violent as to threaten sudden death. While in this state, Boehler came to his bed-side. “I asked him,” adds Mr. C. Wesley, “to pray

\* Mr. C. Wesley found, that he was not renewed, and thought he might die while endeavouring after it. The question, therefore, was to him of serious importance. The right answer would have been, “He cannot die in that state, for God will not *quench the smoking flax*. He must fall from it, or he must attain the faith of the Gospel.”

for me. He seemed unwilling at first ; but, beginning faintly, he raised his voice by degrees, and prayed for my recovery with strange confidence. Then he took me by the hand and calmly said, ‘ You will not die now.’ I thought within myself, I cannot hold out in this pain till morning. He said, ‘ Do ‘ you hope to be saved ?’ I answered, Yes.—‘ For what ‘ reason do you hope to be saved ?’ Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God.—He shook his head and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart, What ! are not my endeavours a sufficient ground of hope ? Would he rob me of my endeavours ? I have nothing else to trust to.” We see here how far he still was from the faith of the Gospel ; but it seems to have been one of the last efforts of self-righteousness. The disease soon abated.

As Mr. C. Wesley still retained his office, and his intention of returning to Georgia with Mr. Oglethorpe, he was called upon to embark before he was perfectly recovered ; but the physicians absolutely forbade him to attempt the voyage. His friends also advised him to stay at Oxford, where, being Senior Master in his College, he might gain preferment. His brother urged the same advice, and, in compliance with it, he wrote to Mr. Oglethorpe on the 3d of April, resigning his office of Secretary. Mr. Oglethorpe was unwilling to lose him, having had ample proof of his integrity and ability, and wrote in answer, that if he would keep his place, it should be supplied by a Deputy until he could follow. But he now seems to have finally relinquished his intention of going back to America.

Mr. John Wesley had now also become acquainted with Peter Boehler. On the 7th of February, (“ a day,” he observes in his Journal, “ much to be remembered,”) he met that gentleman and two other teachers of the Moravian Church. He had supposed, that a strict and self-denying regard to the duties which he owed to God and man, would

produce in him the true Christian faith. In this he was painfully disappointed. He told me, that, together with *those fruits meet for repentance*, he had given himself a fortnight to root out of his heart each of the spiritual evils which he discovered therein,—pride, anger, self-will, &c.; but found, at the end of the prescribed time, that his enemy still retained possession, and seemed even to increase in strength. He well noted this in his sermon, before the University, on *Salvation by faith*. “Can you empty the great deep, drop by drop?” &c. No; our present salvation depends much more on what we *receive*, than on what we *do*. He now began to feel something of this poverty of spirit.

Mr. Wesley had observed at sea and in America, that many of the Moravian brethren enjoyed a peace and a comfort in their minds, to which he was a stranger. He was now, therefore, prepared to hear what those messengers of God had to say on the nature of faith, and on the way of obtaining it. But, though he was a sincere inquirer after truth, and therefore said both to God and man, “What I know not, teach thou me,” yet in a point of such importance, he would—

Not to man, but God submit :

And, therefore, he made continual objections, which caused his friend to reply more than once, *Mi frater, mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua philosophia* : “My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away!” The reproach which he formerly endured at Oxford now again revived; and even as he walked through the squares of the Colleges, he was mocked and laughed at. Upon one of those occasions, as Mr. Wesley informed me, the stranger perceiving that Mr. Wesley was troubled at it, chiefly for his sake, said with a smile, “*Mi frater, non adhæret vestibus* : My brother, it does not even stick to our clothes.”

He now went to see his brother Samuel and some other friends, and afterwards took a longer journey. At this time,



he renewed and wrote down the following resolutions, with respect to his own behaviour.

1. To use absolute openness and unreserve with all he should converse with.

2. To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter, no, not for a moment.

3. To speak no word which did not tend to the glory of God ; in particular, not a tittle of worldly things. “ Others may,” said he, “ nay, must. But what is that to me ?” And

4. To take no pleasure which did not tend to the glory of God ; thanking God every moment for all he took, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it, which he felt he could not so thank him *in* and *for*.

His brother Charles being dangerously ill, as already mentioned, he returned to Oxford. Here he again conversed largely with Peter Boehler, and “ by him,” said he, “ in the hand of the great God, I was clearly convinced of the want of that faith, whereby alone we are saved.”

Immediately he felt an inclination to leave off preaching. “ How,” thought he, “ can I preach to others, who have not faith myself ?” He asked his friend, whether he should leave it off or not. “ By no means,” said he, “ preach faith *till* you have it ; and then, *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith.”

But a difficulty still remained : How is this faith given ? He had now no objection to what his friend said of the *nature* of Christian faith ; that it is, (to use the words of the Church of England,) *a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.* “ Neither,” said he, “ could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. Those passages of scripture, ‘ *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.*’ And ‘ *He that believeth hath*

*the witness in himself*," fully convinced me of the former : As, ' *Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; and Whosoever believeth, is born of God,*' did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of *an instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment ; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light,—from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles : but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions ; scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but *one* retreat left, viz. ' *Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of Christianity ; but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now ?*' "

" But," proceeds he, " I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses ; who testified God had thus wrought in themselves ; giving them, in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, ' *Lord, help thou my unbelief!*' "

He proceeds, " I asked P. Boehler again, Whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others ? He said, ' No ; do ' not hide in the earth the talent God hath given you.' Accordingly I spoke clearly and fully at Blendon to Mr. Delamotte's family, of the nature and fruits of christian faith. Mr. Broughton and my brother were there. Mr. Broughton's great objection was, ' He could never think that I had not ' faith, who had done and suffered such things.' My brother was very angry, and told me, ' I did not know what mischief ' I had done by talking thus.' And indeed it did please God then to kindle a fire, which I trust shall never be extinguished."

He now declared every where “ *the faith as it is in Jesus* :” “ a strange doctrine,” says he, “ which some, who did not care to contradict it, (for indeed how could they without denying both the Bible and the Church of England?) yet knew not what to make of. But some who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard, and received it gladly.”

His friend Boehler soon after sailed for America. Upon this occasion, he remarks, in the fulness of his heart, “ O what a work hath God begun since his coming into England ! such a one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth shall pass away !” There were now, indeed, several witnesses to the truth which he had spoken, whose testimony mightily encouraged others to come to the throne of grace, that they also might “ *be partakers of like precious faith*.”

His mind being now fully impressed with Gospel truth, Mr. Wesley mourned over those who were still ignorantly seeking to be *justified by the works of the law*. He felt particularly for his friend and adviser Mr. Law, under a painful sense of the state of that great and good man, so far removed from the blessedness of faith. He therefore thought it his duty to press upon him those truths which now occupied his whole soul. His letter, Mr. Law’s reply, and Mr. Wesley’s rejoinder, are highly characteristic of the men. The simplicity, earnestness, and strength of the “ *babe in Christ*,” form a striking contrast to the stateliness of the pious *disciple of John*. Mr. Wesley’s first letter is dated May the 14th, 1738. These letters have been printed incorrectly. The originals now lie before me in his own hand.

“ *May 14th, 1738.*

“ REVEREND SIR,

“ It is in obedience to what I think to be the call of God, that I, who have the sentence of death in my own soul, take upon me to write to you, of whom I have often desired to learn the first elements of the Gospel of CHRIST.

“ If you are born of God, you will approve of the design.

though it may be but weakly executed. If not, I shall grieve for you, not for myself. For as I seek not the praise of men, so neither regard I the contempt either of you or of any other.

“ For two years, (more especially,) I have been preaching after the model of your two practical treatises; and all that heard, have allowed, that the law is great, wonderful, and holy. But no sooner did they attempt to fulfil it, but they found that it is too high for man, and that, by doing *‘the works of the law, shall no flesh living be justified.’*

“ To remedy this, I exhorted them, and stirred up myself to pray earnestly for the Grace of God, and to use all the other means of obtaining that Grace, which the all-wise God hath appointed. But still, both they and I were more and more convinced,—that this is a law by which a man cannot live: The law in our members continually warring against it, and bringing us into deeper captivity to the law of sin.

“ Under this heavy yoke I might have groaned till death, had not a holy man, to whom God<sup>d</sup> lately directed me, upon my complaining thereof, answered at once, ‘ Believe, and ‘ thou shalt be saved. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with ‘ all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee. This ‘ faith, indeed, as well as the salvation it brings, is the free ‘ gift of God. But seek, and thou shalt find. Strip thyself ‘ naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and ‘ fly to him. For whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no ‘ wise cast out.’

“ Now, Sir, suffer me to ask, how will you answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, *‘ What must I do to be saved?’* Or are you wiser than he? Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ? Never, so as to ground any thing upon *faith in his blood*. Who is this who is laying another foundation? Is not Christ then the first as well as the last? If-

you say, you advised these things, because you knew that I had faith already: Verily you knew nothing of me: You discerned not my spirit at all. I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative, notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head, not in the heart. But what is this to the living, justifying Faith in the Blood of Jesus? The faith that cleanseth from sin: That gives us to have free access to the Father: *To rejoice in hope of the glory of God: To have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us: and the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

“ I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me, was not this, That you had it not yourself? Whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account of a late interview he had with you? ‘ I began speaking to him of faith in Christ: He was silent. ‘ Then he begun to speak of mystical matters. I spake to ‘ him of faith in Christ again: He was silent. Then he began ‘ to speak of mystical matters again. I saw his state at once.’ And a very dangerous one, in his judgment, whom I know to have the Spirit of God.

“ Once more, Sir, let me beg you to consider, whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behaviour, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ? \* If not, may the God of peace and love fill up what is yet wanting in you !

“ I am,

“ Reverend Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY ”

*To the Reverend William Law.*

\* I once asked Mrs. Hall, who knew Mr. Law, concerning his appearance and manner. “ Sir,” said she, “ he was like his name,—the very picture of *the Law*. He had a severe and solemn, but not a happy look.

## MR. LAW'S ANSWER.

“ *May 19th, 1738.*

“ REVEREND SIR,

“ YOURS I received yesterday. As you have written that letter in obedience to a divine call, and in conjunction with another extraordinary good young man, whom you know to have the Spirit of God; so I assure you, that, considering your letter in that view, I neither desire nor dare to make the smallest defence of myself. If a messenger from God should represent me as a monster of iniquity, that had corrupted all that had conversed with me, &c. I should lay my hand upon my mouth, and with my eyes shut, submit myself to the divine justice. And as you lay claim to this character, as a messenger sent from God to lay my sins before my face, and have not executed this message, till a divine man, highly favoured of God, had passed sentence upon me, so I assure you, that I have not the least inclination to distrust or question your mission, nor the smallest repugnance to own, receive, reverence, and submit myself to you both, in these exalted characters. May God vouchsafe his favours to you both, and his mercies to me, according to his own good pleasure!

“ This is the whole of my answer to your letter, considered in that light in which you represent it; as written in obedience to a divine call, and the message of it ratified by a person whom you know to have the Spirit of God.

“ But now, upon supposition, that you had here only acted by that ordinary light which is common to good and sober minds, I should remark upon your letter as follows:—How you may have been two years preaching the doctrine of the two Practical Discourses, or how you may have tired yourself and your hearers to no purpose, is what I cannot say much to. A holy man, you say, taught you thus: ‘ *Believe, and thou shalt be saved: Believe in the Lord Jesus with all thy heart, and nothing shall be impossible to thee: Strip thy-*

‘ *self naked of thy own works, and thy own righteousness, and fly to him : For every one that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out.*’ .

“ I am to suppose, that, till this time of your lately meeting with this holy man, you had not been taught this doctrine; and that, for want of it, you might have groaned under a certain heavy yoke to your death. Did you not, above two years ago, give a new translation of *Thomas a Kempis*? Will you call Thomas to account, and to answer it to God, as you do me, for not teaching you that doctrine? Or will you say, that you took upon you to restore the true sense of that divine writer, and to instruct others how they might best profit by reading him, before you had so much as a literal knowledge of the most plain, open, and repeated doctrine contained in his book? You cannot but remember what value I always expressed for Kempis, and how much I recommended it to your meditation.

“ You have had a great many conversations with me, and I dare say, that you never was with me for half an hour without my being large upon that very doctrine, of which you make me totally silent and ignorant.

“ As an undeniable proof of this, you must remember, that the second time I saw you, and when your brother was with you, I put into your hands the little book of the German Theology, and said all that I could in recommendation of the doctrine contained in it. If that book does not plainly lead you to Jesus Christ, I am content to know as little of Christianity, as you are pleased to believe; or if you are for stripping yourself naked of your own works, or your own righteousness, further than that book directs, I had rather you was taught that doctrine by any one else than by me. Above a year ago I published a book against the *Plain Account of the Sacrament*, &c. You may, perhaps, be too much prejudiced against me to read it, but as you have made yourself a judge of the state of my heart, and of my knowledge in Christ, you ought to

have seen that book, to help you to make a right judgment of my sentiments. What I have there written, I judged to be well-timed after my former discourses; governed through all that I have written and done by these two common, fundamental, unchangeable maxims of our Lord, ‘*Without me ye can do nothing: If any man will come after me, or be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me.*’ If you are for separating the doctrine of the cross, from faith in Christ, or following him, you have numbers and names enough on your side, but not me. The conversation I have had with you is past and gone, and you have it in your power to represent it as you please; but the facts I have appealed to, must continue facts, and prove all that for which I appeal to them. You say, ‘*Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ? Never, so as to ground any thing upon faith in his blood? If,*’ you say, ‘*you advised other things as preparatory to this, if you advised them, because you knew I had faith already; verily, you knew nothing of me, you discerned not my spirit at all: I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas, that speculative notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head and not in the heart.*’

“ Did you never hear any thing of this from me? How far I may have discerned your spirit, or the spirit of others that have conversed with me, may, perhaps, be more a secret to you, than you imagine; but I claim nothing on that head. But granting you to be right in the account of your own faith, how am I chargeable with it? Have either I or any of my writings, any tendency to fill your head full of ‘airy shadows?’

“ Here I am to suppose, that after you had been sometime meditating upon an author, that of all others leads us the most directly to a real, living faith in Jesus Christ; after you had judged yourself such a master of his sentiments and doctrines, as to be able to publish them to the world, with



directions and instructions concerning such experimental divinity; that years after you had done this, you had only the faith of a devil, or Judas, an empty notion in your head; and that you was in this state through ignorance that there was any better to be sought after, and that you was in this ignorance, because, in my conversation, I never directed or called you to this true faith.

“ But, Sir, as Kempis and I have both of us had your acquaintance and conversation, so pray let the fault be divided betwixt us; and I shall be content to have it said, that I left you in as much ignorance of this faith, as he did, or that you learnt no more of it by conversing with me, than with him. If you had only this faith till some weeks ago, let me advise you not to be too hasty in believing, that because you have changed your language or expressions, you have changed your faith. The head can as easily amuse itself with a *living and justifying faith in the blood of Jesus*, as with any other notion; and the heart which you suppose to be a place of security, as being the seat of self-love, is more deceitful than the head.

“ I must now transcribe a long passage in your letter, because not a word of it ought to be omitted. It is thus; ‘ *I beseech you, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially, whether the true reason of your never calling me to this, was not, that you had it not yourself? Whether that man of God was not in the right, who gave this account: I began to speak to him of faith in Christ: He was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spoke of faith in Christ again: He was silent. Then he spoke of mystical matters again:—I SAW HIS STATE AT ONCE. And a very dangerous one in his judgment; whom I know to have the Spirit of God.*’

“ This man of God, whom I can willingly believe to be as divine as you represent him to be, and whose conversation left a good impression on my mind, was accidentally presented

to me in Somerset Gardens, as the acquaintance of an author I was enquiring after, and whose book was then in my hands. I was not half an hour with him in that public place, nor had any intention, at that time, of saying any thing to him, but upon the matter above-mentioned. In discourse of that kind, he took occasion, as he says, to speak of faith in Christ. I was silent, except in approbation of what he said. But that I then begun to speak of mystical matters, is as false as any thing that can be said of me: For I spoke not one single word of any doctrine of religion, either mystical or not. Or if I had spoke of mystical matters, would that have been a receding from the subject he was upon? Is not faith in Jesus Christ the very sum and substance of what is meant by mystical religion? He said very little to me on faith; but, for aught I know, there might be, what he calls, a first and second time, in what he said to me. But that I, a second time, begun to speak to him of mystical matters, is a second great falsity. I leave you now to judge of his SEEING MY DANGEROUS STATE AT ONCE.

“As this falsity lies amongst us three, I suppose you will not think it proper, that either of you should have any share in it, it being fitter to be ascribed to that state you have provided for me. I am content that you should do with it according to your pleasure.

“Your last paragraph, concerning my sour rough behaviour and obscurity of conversation on the most important subjects, as inconsistent with scripture and the fruits of a living faith in Christ, I leave in its full force. Whatever you can say of me of that kind, without hurting yourself, will be always well received by me.

“I am

“Your real friend and well-wisher,

“W. LAW.”

Mr. Wesley returned the following answer :

“ May 30, 1738.

“ REV. SIR,

“ I sincerely thank you for a favour I did not expect, and presume to trouble you once more.

“ How I have preached all my life;—how qualified or unqualified I was to correct a translation of Kempis, and to translate a preface to it ;—whether I have now, or how long I have had, a living faith ;—whether Peter Boehler spoke truth in what he said, when two others were present beside me ;—are circumstances, on which the main question does not turn, which is this and no other : ‘ Whether you ever advised ‘ me, or directed me to books that did advise me, to seek first ‘ a living faith in the blood of Christ, and that thereby alone ‘ I could be justified.’

“ You appeal to three facts, to prove that you did. 1st. That you put into my hands ‘ Theologia Germanica.’ 2d. That you published an answer to ‘ The Plain Account of the Sacrament.’ And 3d. That you are governed through all that you have written and done by these two fundamental maxims of our Lord, ‘ *Without me ye can do nothing,*’ and ‘ *If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.*’

“ The facts I allow, but not the consequence. In ‘ Theologia Germanica,’ I remember something of Christ our Pattern, but nothing express of Christ our Atonement. The answer to ‘ The Plain Account of the Sacrament’ I believe to be an excellent book, but not so as to affect the main question. Those two maxims may imply, but do not express, the thing itself; viz. ‘ *He is our propitiation, through faith in his blood.*’

“ But how are you ‘ chargeable with my not having had this faith?’ If, as you intimate, that you discerned my spirit, then you are chargeable thus: (1.) You did not tell me plainly

I had it not. (2.) You never once advised me to seek or to pray for it. (3.) Your advice to me was only proper for such as had faith already ; advices which led me further from it, the closer I adhered to them. (4.) You recommended books to me, which had no tendency to this faith, but a direct one to destroy good works.

“ However, ‘ Let the fault be divided,’ you say, ‘ between ‘ me and Kempis.’ No: If I understood Kempis wrong, it was your part, who discerned my spirit, and saw my mistake, to have explained him, and to have set me right.

“ I ask pardon, Sir, if I have said any thing inconsistent with the obligations I owe you, and the respect I bear to your character.

“ I am,

“ Reverend Sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ J. WESLEY ”

Thus he found Mr. Law’s refined legal system as great a hindrance to the reception of the faith, as he afterwards found his brother Samuel’s self-confidence and High Church principles.

The serious reader will have observed, that, in his enquiries after truth, Mr. Wesley was ever impressed with that sentiment which he uttered in one of his letters to his brother,—“ *Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni*,—it is not a little thing, *it is for my life*.” Accordingly, as a member of the Church of England, he considered himself bound to observe all the ordinances of that church, even to the keeping of Lent, according to the declaration of the Apostle, “ *If a man be circumcised,*” if he be thus admitted, “ *he is bound to keep the whole law*” of that church which thus admits him: And when he took Mr. Law for his guide, believing that he taught the real doctrine of that church in its original purity, he zealously pursued the path pointed out by him, in all its self-denying precepts. When,

therefore, he discovered, that the way laid down by that eminent man differed from the church, and especially from the Holy Scriptures, the same earnestness of spirit led him to testify against it. The scriptures plainly hold out, to every sinner who attends to the voice of God, a present salvation from the guilt, the power, and the nature of sin, and an entire reconciliation with God, who is himself declared to be previously “*reconciled, through the Son of his love.*” But no such *previous reconciliation*, no such *present aid*, was taught by his contemplative friend ; no such encouragement, no such present quickening power and love, were held out to those who groaned under guilt, or felt the chains of sin. A letter now before me, dated Lincoln College, Oxon., June the 26th, 1734, details Mr. Law’s plan, and shews its inefficiency in a striking light. Mr. Law, we see, in his answer to Mr. Wesley’s expostulatory letter, could give, with full sincerity I doubt not, an imposing view of his own system ; but Mr. Wesley was now convinced, that it was not the system of our *reconciled God*. It recommended itself in a way of contrast to the worldly spirit, and therefore was well calculated to *convince of sin* ; but it could go no further. This Mr. Wesley proved, not by theory, but by its total failure in application. But, at the time he wrote this letter, he knew no better way ; yet that he did not give himself up to the *quietism* of the Mystic life, is strikingly evident. This letter represents him as mourning over a sinner, who had felt his condition, but who was discouraged by the *task-master*, who fretted the wound, without having any effectual *medicine to heal the sickness*.

“ REV. SIR,

“ I must earnestly beg your immediate advice, in a case of the greatest importance. Above two years since, I was entrusted with a young gentleman of good sense, and even generous temper, and pretty good learning. Religion he had heard little of ; but Mr. Jackson’s Practice of Devo-

tion, your two Treatises, and Thomas a Kempis, by the blessing of God, awakened him, by degrees, to a true notion and serious practice of it. In this he continued sensibly improving till last Lent: At the beginning of which, I advised him to do as he had done the year before, viz. to obey the order of the Church, by using such a sort and measure of abstinence as his health permitted, and his spiritual wants required. He said, ‘he did not think his health would permit ‘to use that abstinence which he did the year before.’ And notwithstanding my reply, that his athletic habit could be in no danger by only abstaining from flesh, and using moderately some less pleasing food, he persisted in his resolution of not altering his food at all. A little before Easter, perceiving he had much contracted the time he had till then set apart for religious reading, I asked him whether he was not himself convinced, that he spent too much time in reading secular authors. He answered, ‘he was convinced any time was too ‘much; and that he should be a better Christian, if he never ‘read them at all.’ I then pressed him earnestly to pray for strength, according to that conviction; and he resolved to try for a week. When that was expired, he said his desire of classical reading was not inflamed, but a little abated: Upon which, I begged him to repeat his resolution for a week or two longer. He said, ‘It signified nothing, for he could ‘never part with the classics entirely.’ I desired him to read that which you say in the ‘Christian Perfection,’ on reading vain authors. He readily agreed to every word of it, but still, in his practice, denied it; though appearing, in most other particulars, a humble, active, zealous Christian. On Tuesday, April 3d, being one of the days the statutes require us to communicate at St. Mary’s, I called upon him just before church, being to set out for Lincolnshire as soon as the service was over. I asked whether he still halted between two opinions; and, after exhorting him as I could to renounce himself, and serve his Master with simplicity, I left him. He

did not communicate that day. On my return, May the 21st, I immediately enquired what state he was in, and found he had never communicated since, which he used to do weekly; that he had left off rising early, visiting the poor, and almost all religious reading, and entirely given himself up to secular. When I asked him why he had left off the holy eucharist, he said fairly, 'because to partake of it implied a fresh promise to renounce himself entirely, and to please God alone, and he did not design to do so.' I asked, whether he was well convinced he ought to do so. He said, 'Yes.' Whether he wished he could design it. He answered, 'No; he did not *desire it*.'

"From time to time, particularly a few days ago, I wished him to tell me upon what he grounded his hope of salvation? He replied, after some pause,—'that Christ died for all men, but if none were saved by him without performing the conditions, his death would not avail one in a thousand, which was inconsistent with the goodness of God.' But this answer, and every part of it, he soon gave up, adding with the utmost seriousness, that 'he cared not whether it was true or no: He was very happy at present, and he desired nothing further.'

"This morning I again asked him, what he thought of his own state? He said, 'he thought nothing about it.' I desired to know, whether he could, if he considered it ever so little, expect to be saved by the terms of the Christian covenant? He answered, 'he did not consider it at all: Nor did all I could say in the least move him. He assented to all, but was affected with nothing. He grants, with all composure, that he is not in a salvable state, and shews no degree of concern, while he owns he cannot find mercy.

"I am now entirely at a loss what step to take: Pray he cannot, or wont. When I lent him several prayers, he returned them unused, saying '*he does not desire to be otherwise than he is, and why should he pray for it.*' I do not seem so much as to understand his distemper.\* It appears to me

\* How well he understood it! How well he could prescribe for it afterwards.

quite incomprehensible. Much less can I tell what remedies are proper for it. I therefore beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of God, that you would not be slack, according to the ability He shall give, to advise and pray for him, and am,

“ Reverend Sir,

“ Your most obliged servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY ”

“ *Lincoln College, Oxon.*

“ *June 26, 1734.* ”

I wish I could close this interesting scene by stating the result of this earnest application ; but there is no record of it, at least none, come to my hands.

About this time he began to pray extempore. March 27, 1738, Mr. Kinchin went with him to the Castle, where, after reading prayers and preaching on, “ *It is appointed for men once to die,* ” “ We prayed,” says he, “ with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having ‘ *no rest in his bones by reason of his sins.* ’ After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, ‘ *I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me.* ’ The same composed cheerfulness he shewed when he was carried to execution : And in his last moments was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence that he was ‘ *accepted in the Beloved.* ’ ”

Mr. Wesley again observes, that on Saturday, April 1, being at Mr. Foxe’s society, he found his heart so full, that he could not confine himself to the forms of prayer they were accustomed to use there. “ Neither,” says he, “ do I propose to be confined to them any more ; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions.”—When God gives the spirit of prayer, deliverance is near.

April 24, Mr. C. Wesley being much recovered from an



attack of illness, he was able to take a ride to Blendon, where he met with his brother and Mr. Broughton. The next day, April 25th, Mrs. Delamotte, his brother, Mr. Broughton and himself being met in their little chapel, they fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. Mr. John Wesley very positively contended for the latter, and his assertions appeared to Mr. Charles shocking; especially when he mentioned some late instances of gross sinners being converted in a moment. Mrs. Delamotte left the room abruptly; "I staid," adds Charles, "and insisted that a man need not know when he first had faith." His brother's obstinacy, as he calls it, in maintaining the contrary opinion, at length drove him out of the room. Mr. Broughton kept his ground, not being quite so much offended as Mr. Charles Wesley. He and Mrs. Delamotte fled from the *robber* who would divest them of their Pharisaic robes.

Mr. Wesley and Mr. Broughton having returned to London, Mr. C. Wesley began to read Haliburton's life. It produced in him great humiliation, self-abasement, and a sense of his want of that faith which brings "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" But these effects soon passed away as a morning cloud. A degree of conviction, however, that possibly he might be wrong, had taken hold of his mind; and continued to make him uneasy. This uneasiness was increased by a return of his disorder on the 28th, when he arrived in London. Here Peter Boehler visited him again, and prayed with him. Mr. Charles Wesley now thought it was his duty to consider Boehler's doctrine, and to examine himself whether he was in the faith; and if not, never to rest till he had attained it. Still, however, there was a secret wish within his heart that this new doctrine, as he then thought it, might not be true; and hence arose a joy when he imagined he had found an argument against it. This argument was from his own experience, and he deemed it unanswerable. Having received benefit by bleeding, he attended the sacra-

ment on the first of May, and felt a degree of peace in receiving it. "Now," said he to himself, "I have demonstration against the Moravian doctrine, viz. that a man cannot have peace without assurance of his pardon. I now have peace, yet cannot say of a surety that my sins are forgiven." His triumph was very short: His peace immediately left him, and he sunk into greater doubts and distress than before. He now began to be convinced, that he had not that faith which puts the true believer in possession of the benefits and privileges of the Gospel. For some days following, he had a faint desire to attain it, and prayed for it. He then began to speak of the necessity of this faith to his friends; and he determined not to rest till he had the happy experience of it in himself.

Soon afterwards Mr. Broughton called upon him at the house of Mr. Bray. The subject was presently introduced. Mr. Broughton said, "As for you, Mr. Bray, I hope you are still in your senses, and not run mad after a faith that must be felt." He continued contradicting this doctrine of faith, till he roused Mr. C. Wesley to defend it, and to confess his want of faith. "God help you, poor man!" said Mr. Broughton, "if I could think that you have not faith, I am sure it would drive me to despair." \* Mr. C. Wesley then assured him, he was as certain that "*he had not the faith of the Gospel*, as he was that he hoped for it, and for salvation."

Mr. Broughton was a man of learning, had been a member of their little society at Oxford, and was well disposed to religion. Yet he strangely thought that he could not place the absurdity of their notion in a stronger light, than by saying, this faith must be felt. As if it were possible for a man to believe a proposition, whatever it may be, and not be conscious that he believes it: Or to have doubts, and be totally unconscious and ignorant of them!

\* Yes, to a despair of being saved without it. *That* despair must precede the gift; but it is as far from what the world calls despair, as hell is from heaven.

Mr. Charles Wesley now saw, that the Gospel promises to man a knowledge of God as “*reconciled in Christ Jesus*,” which he had not attained; and he became more and more earnest in pursuit of it. On the 12th of May, he waked in the morning, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, “*even the righteousness which is of God by faith*.” He read Isaiah, and saw, that unto him also were the promises made. He now spent the whole of his time in discoursing on faith, either with those who had it, or with those who sought it; and in reading the Scriptures and prayer.

On this day Mr. Wesley observes, that he was much affected at the sight of old Mr. Ainsworth; a man of great learning, and nearly eighty years of age. “Like old Simeon, he was waiting to see the Lord’s salvation, that he might die in peace. His tears, his vehemency, and child-like simplicity, shewed him upon the entrance of the kingdom of heaven.” Mr. Ainsworth seems to have been fully convinced of the true doctrines of the Gospel, and to have joined himself to this little company who were endeavouring to know and serve God as the Gospel directs. Mr. Wesley mentions him afterwards, with great admiration of his simplicity and child-like disposition. We are indebted to him for the best Latin and English Dictionary extant. He died in 1743.

May 17th, Mr. C. Wesley first saw “LUTHER on the Galatians,” which Mr. Holland had accidentally met with. They immediately began to read him: “And my friend,” adds Mr. C. Wesley, “was so affected in hearing him read, that he breathed sighs and groans unutterable. I also *marvelled that we were so soon and entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel*. Who would believe, that our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone? \* I am astonished I

\* Mr. C. Wesley did not then see the nature of Antinomianism in that work,—the infernal shadow that has ever followed the true faith. Of this, Luther was not himself conscious when he wrote that book.

should ever think this a new doctrine ; especially while our Articles and Homilies stand unrepealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away. From this time I endeavoured to ground as many of our friends as came to see me, in this fundamental truth,—*Salvation by faith alone*—not an idle and dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is incessantly productive of all good works, and all holiness.”

May the 19th, a Mrs. Turner called upon him, who professed faith in Christ. Mr. C. Wesley asked her several questions ; to which she returned the following answers. Has God bestowed faith upon you ? “ Yes, he has.”—Why, have you peace with God ? “ Yes, perfect peace.”—And do you love Christ above all things ? “ I do, above all things.”—Then you are willing to die. “ I am, and would be glad to die this moment ; for I know that all my sins are blotted out ; the hand-writing that was against me, is taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross. He has saved me by his death ; he has washed me in his blood ; I have peace in him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”—Mr. C. Wesley adds, “ Her answers were so full to these and the most searching questions I could ask, that I had no doubt of her having *received the atonement* ; and waited for it myself with more assured hope, feeling an anticipation of joy through the account she gave.” Mr. Charles Wesley was an accurate discerner of spirits, in the ordinary sense of that expression. The real character of faith must therefore have appeared in this gentlewoman.

Mr. C. Wesley’s knowledge of himself, and conscious want of peace with God, on a foundation that cannot be shaken, furnished him with a key which opened the true meaning of the Scriptures. He saw the gospel contained ample provision for all his wants, and that its operation on the mind is also admirably adapted to the human faculties. He now lost the pride of literature, and sought *the kingdom of heaven as a little child* : He counted all things as dung and dross in com-

parison of it ; and all his thoughts, his desires, his hopes and his fears, had some relation to it. He was now brought to the birth. On Whitsunday, May 21st, he waked in hope and expectation of soon attaining the object of his wishes,—the knowledge of God reconciled in Christ Jesus. At nine o'clock his brother and some friends came to him, and sung a hymn suited to the day. When they left him, he betook himself to prayer. Soon afterwards a person came and said, in a very solemn manner, “Believe in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities.” The words went through his heart, and animated him with confidence. He looked into the Scripture, and read, “*Now, Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee.*” He then cast his eyes on these words, “*He hath put a new song into my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.*” Afterwards he opened upon Isaiah xl, 1. “*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*” In reading these passages of Scripture, he was enabled to view Christ as “*set forth to be a propitiation for his sins; through faith in his blood,*” and received, to his unspeakable comfort, that peace and rest in God, which he had so earnestly sought.

The next morning he waked with a sense of the Divine goodness and protection, and rejoiced in reading the 107th Psalm, so nobly descriptive, he observes, of what God had done for his soul.—Yet he had no self-confidence. “This day,” says he, “I had a very humbling view of my own weakness; but was enabled to contemplate ‘*Christ in his power to save, to the uttermost, all those who come unto God by him.*’” Many evil thoughts were suggested to his mind, but they immediately vanished away. In the afternoon he was greatly strengthened by those words in the 43d of Isaiah,

which he saw were spoken to encourage and comfort the true Israel of God, in every age of his church. “*But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.*”

The two brothers were now led to pray according to their wants, and the exercises of their own minds; but they were greatly censured by some persons, particularly by their brother Samuel, when they began this practice. That a form of prayer may be useful, and also proper on some occasions, especially in public worship, we readily grant. But to say, that we shall not ask a favour of God, nor return him thanks; or that we shall hold no intercourse with Him in our public assemblies, but in a set of words dictated to us by others, is an assumption which is not warranted either by Scripture or reason, and it is ill adapted to edification or comfort.

An old friend soon after called on Mr. C. Wesley, under great apprehensions that he was running mad. His fears were not a little increased, when he heard him speak of some instances of the power and goodness of God. His friend told him, that he expected to see rays of light round his head!, and said a good deal more in the same strain. Finding, by Mr. C. Wesley's conversation, that he was past recovery, he begged him to fly from London, and took his leave in despair of doing him any good.

May the 23d, he wrote a hymn on his own conversion. Upon shewing it to Mr. Bray, a thought was suggested to his mind, that he had done wrong and displeased God. His heart immediately sunk within him; but the shock lasted only for a moment. “I clearly discerned,” says he, “it was

a device of the enemy to keep glory from God. It is most usual with him to preach humility, when speaking would endanger his kingdom and do honour to Christ. Least of all, would he have us tell *what God has done for our souls*, so tenderly does *he* guard us against pride! But God has shewed me, that he can defend me from it, while speaking for Him. In his name, therefore, and through his strength, I will perform my vows unto the Lord, of '*not hiding his righteousness within my heart.*' "

Mr. John Wesley, although not yet a partaker of it, continued to declare, "*the faith as it is in Jesus*," which those that were convinced of sin gladly received. A day or two following, he was much confirmed in the truth, by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox: "Two living witnesses," says he, "that God *can* at least, if he *does* not always, give that faith whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven."

May 1. They began to form themselves into a religious society, which met in Fetter-lane. This has been called the first Methodist society in London. Mr. Wesley distinguishes the origin of Methodism, into three distinct periods. "The first rise of Methodism," says he, "was in November 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford: The second was at Savannah, in April 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house: The last was at London, on this day, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer."\* Although he united with the Moravians thus, he still continued a member and minister of the Church. This meeting was merely a religious society, and so agreed perfectly with Methodism.

The Society being thus formed, they agreed, in obedience to the word of God, given by St. James, v, 16,

\* See his Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. page 175.

1. That they would meet together once a week, to "*confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they might be healed.*"

2. That the persons so meeting should be divided into several Bands, or little companies, none of them consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten persons.

3. That every one in order should speak as freely, plainly and concisely, as he could, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.

4. That all the Bands should have a conference at eight every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

5. That any who desired to be admitted into this Society should be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders? (which may then be read.)

6. That when any new member was proposed, every one present should speak clearly and freely whatever objection he might have to him.

7. That those against whom no reasonable objection appeared, should be, in order for their trial, formed into one or more distinct Bands, and some person agreed on to assist them.

8. That after two months' trial, if no objection then appeared, they should be admitted into the Society.

9. That every fourth Saturday should be observed as a day of general intercession.

10. That on the Sunday seven-night following, there should be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

11. That no particular member should be allowed to act in any thing, contrary to any order of the Society: And that if any persons, after being thrice admonished, should not



conform thereto, they should no longer be esteemed as members.

About this time he was invited to preach in some of the churches. But, as before, many, (particularly of the chief persons in his congregations,) would not endure his plain, heart-searching discourses. He was soon told at each of these also, "Sir, you must preach here no more."—"So true," says he, "did I find the words of a friend, (viz. Mr. Gambold,) in a letter to my brother at this time;" which were as follow:

"I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man; and how peculiarly intolerable to religious men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to Deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and unions; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetic mortification: And all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most universal help and refuge; in such a manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it than we could before expect: If any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence, as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their Mediator, or their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded, that a Montanist or a Novatian, who from the height of his purity should look down with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the Gospel, as he who should learn, from the Author of it, to be a friend of publicans and sinners; and to sit down upon a level with them as soon as they begin to repent.

"But this is not to be wondered at. For all religious

people have such a quantity of righteousness acquired by much painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits : which is their wealth, both for this world and the next. Now all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant, as to tell them, they are very rich and have enough to triumph in : Or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them, their riches are not yet sufficient ; but, by such arts of self-denial, and mental refinement, they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber. It takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with somebody else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed they that are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners until very lately, may stoop to live in this dependent condition ; it suits them well enough. But they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond moral men ; for them to be told, that they are either not so well, or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels of mercy with the others : This is more shocking to reason, than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honour wrested from it,—to be the architect of virtue and righteousness. But where am I running ? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, *‘this foolishness of preaching’* will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you.

“What are you then to do, my dear friend ? I will not exhort you to courage ; we need not talk of that, for nothing that is approaching is evil. I will only mention the prejudice we shall be under, if we seem in the least to lay aside universal charity, and modesty of expression. Though we love some persons more than we did, let us love none less : And the rather, because we cannot say any one is bad, or destitute of Divine grace, for not thinking as we do. Indignation at mankind, is a temper unsuitable to this cause. If we are at peace with God in Christ, let it soften our demeanour still more, even towards gainsayers.—What has given most offence

hitherto, is what perhaps may best be spared : As some people's confident and hasty triumphs in the grace of God ; not by way of humble thankfulness to him for looking upon them, or acknowledgment of some peace and strength unknown before, which they hope will be increased to them ; but insisting on the completeness of their deliverance already from all sin, and taking to them every apostolical boast in the strongest terms.—Let us speak of every thing in such manner as may convey glory to Christ, without letting it glance on ourselves by the way. Let us profess, when we can with truth, how really the Christian salvation is fulfilled in us, rather than how sublimely.”—These sentiments are still of the highest importance. Mr. Wesley accounted them essential to the success of the Gospel, and to a believer's “*abiding in the faith.*”

He also was now *brought to the birth*. “*His soul truly waited upon God,*” knowing that “*from him cometh our salvation.*” But so much the more did he “*abhor himself, and repent as in dust and ashes.*” As he now expected, that Christ, given for him, would be manifested in him, he also felt that compunction, that deep self-abasement, which must ever precede true living faith in the Son of God. His state of mind at this time he thus pathetically expresses, in the following letter to a friend :

“O why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as me ! Lord, ‘*let the dead bury their dead !*’ But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead ? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt* send, and shewest mercy by whom thou *wilt* shew mercy ! Amen ! Be it then according to thy will ! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.—

“I feel what you say, (though not enough,) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just and good. I know, every thought, every temper of my soul ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God ! I feel, that I ‘*am sold under sin.*’ I know, that I too deserve no-

thing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire: I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

“Yet I hear a voice, (and is it not the voice of God?) saying, *‘Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth, is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.’*”\*

“O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel *‘peace with God,’* and *‘joy in the Holy Ghost?’* Does his *‘Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?’* Alas! with mine he does not. Nor, I fear, with your’s. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but Thee! Draw us after Thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with *‘all peace and joy in believing,’* and let nothing separate us from thy love, in time or in eternity!”

The account which immediately follows, is of such deep importance, that I am constrained to give it entire in his own words. Mr. Wesley’s actual obtaining the true *faith of the Gospel*, is a point of the utmost magnitude, not only with respect to himself, but to others. For it was not till after this, that God was pleased to own him in such a remarkable manner in the salvation of souls, as was evidenced in his future labours.

“What occurred on Wednesday, May 24, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better

\* He was now *poor in spirit*, and therefore *the kingdom of heaven was his*. He was soon put in possession. The Lord could now, in truth, *impute his faith for righteousness*.

understood. Let him that cannot receive it, ask of the Father of lights, that he would give more light to him and me.

“ I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that ‘ *washing of the Holy Ghost* ’ which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God ; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the law, as I was of the gospel of Christ.

“ The next six or seven years were spent at school ; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties ; and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was—(1.) Not being so bad as other people. (2.) Having still a kindness for religion. And (3.) Reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my prayers.

“ Being removed to the University, for five years I still said my prayers, both in public and in private, and read with the scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not, all this while, so much as a notion of inward holiness ; nay, went on habitually, and (for the most part) very contentedly, in some or other known sin ; indeed, with some intermissions and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call *repentance*.

“When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time, the providence of God directing me to Kempis’s Christian Pattern, I began to see, that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God’s law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis, for being *too strict*, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope’s translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before; and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon *a new life*. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, doing so much, and living so good a life, I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

“Removing soon after to another College, I executed a resolution, which, I was before convinced, was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins. I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law’s ‘Christian Perfection and Serious Call,’ (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him, as I had never done before: And, by my continued endeavour to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

“ In 1730, I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and sick in town, and doing what other good I could, by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessities of life. I soon became a bye-word for so doing, and I rejoiced that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient Church, taking no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any farther. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful. I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good : I, for that reason, suffered evil : And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised, not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that ‘ *other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid by God, even Christ Jesus.*’

“ Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before, that outward works are nothing, being alone ; and, in several conversations, instructed me how to pursue inward holiness, or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions, (though I then received them as the words of God,) I cannot but now observe—(1.) That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting in outward works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. (2.) That he recommended, (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them,) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul and uniting it with God.

Now these were, in truth, as much *my own works* as visiting the sick or clothing the naked; and the *union with God* thus pursued, was as really *my own righteousness* as any I had before pursued, under another name.

“ In this *refined* way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness, (so zealously inculcated by the Mystic writers,) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving England. On ship-board, however, I was again active in outward works, where it pleased God, of his free mercy, to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavoured to shew me a more excellent way. But I understood it not at first: I was too learned and too wise: So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And I continued preaching and following after and trusting in that righteousness, whereby no flesh can be justified.

“ All the time I was at Savannah, I was thus ‘*beating the air.*’ Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which, by a living faith in him, bringeth salvation ‘*to every one that believeth,*’ I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so laboured in the fire all my days. I was now properly ‘*under the law* ;’ I knew that the law of God was spiritual; I consented to it that it was good; yea, I delighted in it ‘*after the inner man.*’ Yet was I ‘*carnal, sold under sin.*’ Every day was I constrained to cry out, ‘*What I do, I allow not; for what I would, I do not; but what I hate, that I do. To will is, indeed, present with me: but how to perform that which is good, I find not: For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; even the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and still bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.*’\*

“ In this state I was, indeed, fighting continually, but not

\* Rom. vii.



conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now, it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome and in heaviness; sometimes I overcame and was in joy: For as, in the former state, I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, (which had now continued above ten years,) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble: I had many sensible comforts, which, indeed, are no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still ‘*under the law,*’ not ‘*under grace,*’ the state which most who are called Christians are content to live and die in: For I was only striving with, not freed from sin; neither had I ‘*the witness of the Spirit with my spirit,*’ and, indeed, could not; for ‘*I sought it not by faith, but,*’ as it were, ‘*by the works of the law.*’

“In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced, that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true living faith was the ‘*one thing needful*’ for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was wholly void of this faith, but only thought I had not enough of it. So that, when Peter Boehler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, which is but one, that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, ‘*Dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,*’ I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new Gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this: Therefore, I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove, that faith might be where these were not, especially where the sense of forgiveness was not: For all the scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all

Presbyterians who spoke otherwise.\* Besides, I well saw no one could, in the nature of things, have such a sense of forgiveness and not feel it: But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once. † “When I met Peter Boehler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, viz. scripture and experience. I first consulted the scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavouring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, ‘that experience ‘would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those ‘scriptures; nor could I, therefore, allow it to be true, till ‘I found some living witnesses of it.’ He replied, ‘He could ‘shew me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day’ And, accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present sins. They added with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul, who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end,—(1.) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. (2.) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a trust in him, as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification and redemption.

“I continued thus to seek it, (though with strange indifference, dulness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses

\* See the Note in page 99.

into sin,) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, Τα μεγαλα ημιν και τιμια επαγγελματα δεδωρηται, ινα δια τωτων γενησθε θειας κοινωνοι φύσεως. ‘*There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.*’ 2. Pet. i, 4. Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, ‘*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*’ In the afternoon, I was asked to go to St. Paul’s. The Anthem was, ‘*Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, O Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee, therefore thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption: And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.*’

“In the evening I went very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, *I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.*”

*His soul now magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour.—Because he was a son, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba Father: The Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.—The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him.—And he rejoiced in God, by whom he had now received the atonement.*

Now that he was a child of God, he brought forth ‘*the fruit of the Spirit.*’ As soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. “Immediately,” says he, “I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitely used me and persecuted

me!" And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind he continued, believing in God, and zealous of good works.

His heart was now enlarged to declare, as he never had before, the loving-kindness of the Lord. "*It was his meat and drink, to do his holy and acceptable will.—The word of God dwelt richly in him,*" and was in his mouth as "*a sharp two-edged sword*" to the wicked; but to those who felt the anguish of a "*wounded spirit,*" who had "*turned at God's reproof,*" he was "*an able Minister of the New Testament, holding forth the word of life,*" that *they* also might "*rejoice in God their Saviour.*"

But he also experienced what it was to be weak in this faith, a little child, according to St. John, as well as afterwards to "*be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.*" He was often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him; fear, that he had deceived himself, and stopped short of that grace of God for which he had sought. At other times, letters which he received from injudicious persons concerning the New Birth, and the fruits of Christian Faith, exceedingly troubled him. Few helped, and many strove (most of them ignorantly) to hinder him: to cause him to cast "*away that confidence which hath great recompence of reward.*" But the Lord, who had "*brought him up out of the horrible pit*" of guilt and unbelief, suffered not his tender new-born spirit to faint before him. He often lifted up his head with joy, and girded him with strength.

Under these various exercises of mind, he determined to retire for a short time to Germany. "I had fully purposed," says he, "before I left Georgia, so to do, if it should please God to bring me back to Europe. And I now clearly saw the time was come. My weak mind could not bear to be thus sawn asunder. And I hoped the conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would

be a means, under God, of so establishing my soul, that I might ‘*go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength.*’ ”

Accordingly, having taken leave of his mother, he embarked at Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham, and on Thursday morning, June 15th, landed at Rotterdam.

On his journey through Holland and Germany he conversed with, and was hospitably entertained by many, who were happy partakers of the faith of the Gospel; especially at Marienbourn, where he first conversed with Count Zinzendorf, Count de Solmes, and other eminent persons; and with a large company of witnesses of the power of true religion. From this place he wrote a letter to his brother Samuel, of which the following is an extract:—

“ God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all *one Lord*, and *one faith*, so they are all partakers of *one spirit*, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing Christianity is! And how widely distant from that—I know not what—which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer!”

In their way to Hernhuth, he and his company were stopped at the city of Weymar a considerable time, and were at last brought before Frederick, afterwards King of Prussia, then Prince Royal, as Mr. Wesley was informed. The Prince among other inquiries asked him, “ What are you going so far as Hernhuth for?” Mr. Wesley answered, “ To see the place where the Christians live.” The Prince then looked hard at them, and let them go.

On Tuesday the first of August, they arrived at Hernhuth, a settlement of the Moravians, in Upper Lusatia. The inhabitants of this place were, at least in the general, truly

pious persons, who came there from many parts of Europe, to escape the pollutions of the world, and live wholly to God. No immorality was allowed among them: and every thing that tended to genuine religion was introduced, and earnestly enforced. In this place Mr. Wesley conversed with several persons, that were deeply experienced in the ways of God. He also heard some of them preach, and was thereby abundantly strengthened in the grace of God. He speaks particularly of the benefit he received by the conversation of Michael Linner the chief Elder of the church, and Christian David, who was, under God, the first planter of it. Of the latter he thus speaks:—

“ Four times I enjoyed the blessing of hearing him preach, during the few days I spent here; and every time he chose the very subject which I should have desired, had I spoken to him before. Thrice he described the state of those who are ‘*weak in faith*,’ who are justified, but have not yet a new, clean heart; who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not received the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This state he explained once, from ‘*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven*.’ when he shewed at large from various scriptures, that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before their hearts are softened by holy mourning, before they are comforted by the *abiding witness of the Spirit*, melting their souls into all gentleness and meekness; and much more, before they are renewed in all that ‘*righteousness*’ which they ‘*hungered and thirsted after*,’ before they are ‘*pure in heart* from all self and sin, and ‘*and merciful as their Father which is in heaven is merciful*.’

“ A second time he pointed out this state from those words, ‘*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!—I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*.’ Hence also he at large both proved the existence, and shewed the nature

of that intermediate state, which most experience between that ‘*bondage*’ which is described in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the full ‘*glorious liberty of the children of God*,’ described in the eighth chapter, and in many other parts of Scripture.

“ This he yet again explained from the Scriptures which describe the state the apostles were in, from our Lord’s death, (and indeed for some time before,) till the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. They were then ‘*clean*’ as Christ himself had borne them witness ‘*by the word which he had spoken unto them.*’ They then ‘*had faith,*’ otherwise he could not have prayed for them, that their ‘*faith*’ might ‘*not fail.*’ Yet they were not properly ‘*converted;*’ they were not ‘*delivered from*’ the spirit of fear; they had not ‘*new hearts;*’ neither had they [fully] received ‘*the gift of the Holy Ghost.*’

“ The fourth sermon which he preached, concerning the ground of our faith, made such an impression upon me, that when I went home, I could not but write down the substance of it, which was as follows :—

“ The word of reconciliation which the Apostles preached, as the foundation of all they taught, was that ‘*we are reconciled to God, not by our own works, nor by our own righteousness, but wholly and solely by the blood of Christ.*’

“ But you will say, Must I not grieve and mourn for my sins? Must I not humble myself before God? Is not this just and right? And must I not first do this before I can expect God to be reconciled to me? I answer, it is just and right. You must be humbled before God. You must have a broken and contrite heart. But then observe, this is not your own work. Do you grieve that you are a sinner? This is the work of the Holy Ghost. Are you contrite? Are you humbled before God? Do you indeed mourn, and is your heart broken within you? All this worketh the self-same Spirit.

“ Observe again, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled unto God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humbled. Your heart is broken. Well. But all this is nothing to your justification. The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Nay, observe farther, that it may hinder justification, that is, if you build any thing upon it ; if you think, I must be so or so contrite : I must grieve *more*, before I can be justified. Understand this well. To think you must be *more* contrite, *more* humble, *more* grieved, *more* sensible of the weight of sin, before you can be justified ; is, to lay your contrition, your grief, your humiliation for the foundation of your being justified ; at least for a part of the foundation. Therefore it hinders your justification ; and a hindrance it is which must be removed, before you can lay the right foundation. The right foundation is, not *your* contrition (though that is not *your own*) not *your* righteousness, nothing of *your own* : nothing that is wrought *in you* by the Holy Ghost ; but it is something *without you*, viz. the righteousness and the blood of Christ.

“ For this is the word, ‘ *To him that believeth on God that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*’ See ye not, that nothing ‘ *in us*’ is the foundation ? There is no connection between God and the ungodly. There is no tie to unite them. They are altogether separate from each other. They have nothing in common. There is nothing less or more in the ungodly, to join them to God. Works, righteousness, contrition ? No. Ungodliness only. This then do, if you will lay a right foundation : Go straight to Christ with all your ungodliness. Tell him, ‘ Thou whose eyes are as a flame of fire searching my heart, seest that I am ungodly. I plead nothing else. I do not say I am humble or contrite ; but I am ungodly. Therefore bring me to him that justifieth the ungodly. Let thy blood be



‘ the propitiation for me. For there is nothing in me but ‘ ungodliness.’

“ Here is a mystery. Here the wise men of the world are lost, are taken in their own craftiness. This the learned of the world cannot comprehend. It is foolishness unto them : sin is the only thing which divides men from God. Sin, (*let him that heareth understand,*) is the only thing which unites them to God, that is, the only thing which moves the Lamb of God to have compassion upon, and, by his blood, to give them access to the Father.

“ This is the ‘ *word of reconciliation*’ which we preach. This is the foundation which never can be moved. By faith we are built upon this foundation ; and this faith also is *the gift of God*. It is his free gift, which he now and ever giveth to every one that is willing to receive it. And when they have received this gift of God, then their hearts will melt for sorrow that they have offended him. But this gift of God lives in the heart, not in the head. The faith of the head, learned from men or books, is nothing worth. It brings neither remission of sins, nor peace with God. Labour then to believe with your whole heart. So shall you have redemption through the blood of Christ. So shall you be cleansed from all sin. So shall ye go on from strength to strength, being renewed day by day in righteousness and all true holiness.”

Mr. Wesley was also much strengthened by the religious experience of several holy men, with whom he conversed during his stay in this truly Christian place. One of these, Arvid Gradin, gave him at his request, a definition in writing of the *ωληροφορια πιστεως*, “ *the full assurance of faith,*” in the following words, “ *Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratiâ divinâ ; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax ; cum absentiâ omnis desiderii carnalis et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.*” He added, (testifying at the same time it was his own experience,) “ *Verbo, cor quod antea*

*instar maris turbulenti agitabatur, in summâ fuit requie, instar maris sereni et tranquilli.*—Repose in the blood of Christ : a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour : serene peace and stedfast tranquility of mind, with a deliverance from fleshly (unholy) desire, and from every outward and inward sin. In a word, the heart which before was tossed like a troubled sea, was still and quiet, and in a sweet calm.”

This was the first account Mr. Wesley had heard from any living man “*as his own experience,*” of what he had before learned from the oracles of God. And as, by the former testimonies, he was encouraged to hold fast the beginning of his confidence, so by this he was stimulated to press forward after all the privileges of his high calling, that his joy might be full.

“Gladly,” says he, “would I have spent my life here, but my Master calling me to labour in another part of his vineyard, on Monday August 14th, 1738, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place.” On his departure he makes this reflection, “O when shall *this* Christianity cover the earth, ‘*as the waters cover the sea?*’” After visiting Professor Franck at Halle, (son of the great Professor Franck,) and viewing the schools at Jena founded by Buddæus, he arrived at Rotterdam, where he took ship, and sailed for England. He was now strengthened to do and suffer whatever the wise and holy God, whom he “*served with his spirit in the Gospel of his Son,*” should permit to come upon him in the prosecution of his great design,—of spending his life in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROGRESS AND LABOURS OF THE BROTHERS, IN MAINTAINING THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL.

WHILE Mr. John Wesley was seeking spiritual strength among the believers in Germany, his brother Charles was maintaining “*the good fight of faith*” among the formalists and unbelievers at home. He had obtained satisfactory evidence that he was a pardoned sinner, accepted of God in Christ Jesus, and quickened by his Spirit. He enjoyed constant peace, was extremely watchful over the motions of his own heart, and had a degree of strength to resist temptation, and to do the will of God, which he had not found before his justification. But he felt no great emotion of mind or transport of joy in any of the means of grace. He now intended to receive the sacrament, and was fearful lest he should be as flat and comfortless in this ordinance as formerly : He received it without any very sensible effect on his mind more than usual, but with this difference from his former state, that he found himself, after it was over, calm and satisfied with the goodness of God to his soul, and free from doubt, fear, or scruple of his interest in Christ. In this way he was early taught by experience, not to place too much confidence in any of those sudden and transient impressions, which are often made on the mind, in public or private acts of devotion. The life of faith was now become more natural to him, and his heart was kept in peace, stayed upon God, and watching unto prayer. The Lord was now also evidently teaching him the deep lessons contained in the first Epistle of St. John, concerning little children, young men, and fathers ; lessons wholly unknown to those who have not this faith.

May 28, 1738, he observes that he rose in great heaviness, which neither private nor joint prayer with others could remove. At last he betook himself to intercession for his relations, and was greatly enlarged therein, particularly for a most profligate sinner. He spent the remainder of the morning with James Hutton in prayer, singing, and rejoicing. In the afternoon his brother came, having arrived from Germany; and, after prayer for success on their ministry, Mr. John Wesley set out, intending to go to Tiverton, and Mr. Charles began writing his first sermon after his conversion, "In the name of Christ his prophet." A severe exercise of faith and patience soon followed. June the 1st, he found his mind so exceedingly dull and heavy, that he had scarcely any power to pray. This state increased upon him for several days, till at length he became unconscious of any comfort, or of any impression of good upon his mind in the means of grace. He was averse to prayer, and though he had recovered strength sufficient to go to church, yet he almost resolved not to go at all. When he did go, the prayers and sacrament were a grievous burden to him; instead of a fruitful field, he found the whole service a dreary barren wilderness, destitute of comfort and profit. He felt what he calls, "a cowardly desire of death," to escape from his present painful feelings. He began to examine himself, and to enquire wherein his present state differed from the state he was in before he professed faith. He soon found there was a difference in the following particulars: He observed, the present darkness was not like the former; there was no *guilt* in it; he was persuaded, therefore, that God would remove it in his own time; and he was confident of the love and mercy of God to him in Christ Jesus. The former state was night, the present only a cloudy day; at length the cloud dispersed, and the Sun of righteousness again shone with brightness on his soul. This was a most instructive exercise: It shewed him his own utter helplessness in the work of his salvation. He found by experience, that *he* could not produce

comfort, or any religious affection in himself, even when he most wanted it, and that the work is really the Lord's; and that, therefore, whenever these affections were experienced by others under his ministry, the work was also the Lord's, and he only the mean humble instrument in his hand. Thus God prepared him for great usefulness, and guarded him against pride.

June the 7th, Dr. Byrom\* called upon him. Mr. C. Wesley had a hard struggle with his bashfulness before he could prevail on himself to speak freely to the Doctor on the things of God. At length he gave him a simple relation of his own experience: This brought on a full explanation of the doctrine of faith, which Dr. Byrom received with wonderful readiness. This was similar to the case of the celebrated Dr. Cheyne, who, hearing a young woman relate her own experience, cried out, "O my God! I have been studying Divinity many years, and now the boys and girls know more of it than I do!"—"Why then," said Mr. J. Wesley, when he related the anecdote, "let the boys and girls praise God!"

Mr. C. Wesley having recovered strength, began to move about among his friends. He went to Blendon and to some other places in the country, and found, that the more he laboured in the work of the ministry, the more his joy and happiness in God increased. In his journey he met with the Rev. Mr. Piers; and, on the 9th of this month, in riding to

\* John Byrom, an ingenious poet of Manchester, was born in 1691. His first poetical Essay appeared in the Spectator, No. 603, beginning, "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent;" which, with two humorous letters on dreams, are to be found in the eighth volume. He was admitted a member of the Royal Society in 1724. Having originally entertained thoughts of practising physic, he received the appellation of Doctor, by which he was always known; but reducing himself to narrow circumstances by a precipitate marriage, he supported himself by teaching a new method of short-hand, of his own invention, until an estate devolved to him by the death of an elder brother. He was a man of a ready lively wit, of which he gave many humorous specimens, whenever a favourable opportunity tempted him to indulge his disposition. He died in 1763; and a collection of his Miscellaneous Poems was printed at Manchester, in two volumes octavo, 1773.

Bexley, spake to him of his own experience, with great simplicity, but with confidence. He found Mr. Piers ready to receive the faith. The greatest part of the day was spent in the same manner. Mr. Bray, who was with Mr. C. Wesley, related the dealings of God with his own soul, and shewed what great things God had done for their friends in London. Mr. Piers listened with eager attention to all that was said, made not the least objection, but confessed that these were things which he had never experienced. They then walked, and sung, and prayed in the garden: He was greatly affected, and testified his full conviction of the truth, and desire of finding Christ. "But," said he, "I must first prepare myself by long exercise of prayer and good works." What a mixture! He saw "*men as trees walking.*"

The day before Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray arrived at Blendon, Mr. Piers had been led to read the Homily on Justification, by which he was convinced, that in him, "*by nature, dwelt no good thing.*" This prepared him to receive what these messengers of peace related, concerning their own experience. He now saw, that all the thoughts of his heart were evil, and that continually, forasmuch as "*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*"

June 10th, Mr. Piers became earnest for present salvation; he prayed to God for comfort, and was encouraged by reading Luke v, 23: "*Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thine house,*" &c. Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray now conversed with him on the power of Christ to save, and then prayed with him; they afterwards read the 65th Psalm, and were animated with hope in reading,—"*Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and receivest unto thyself; he shall dwell in thy court, and shall be satisfied with the*

*plenteousness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Thou shalt shew us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation! Thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth," &c.* In the continuance of these exercises alternately, of conversing, reading, and praying together, Mr. Piers received power to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had "*peace and joy in believing.*"

The next day Mr. Piers preached on death; and in hearing him, Mr. C. Wesley observes, "I found great joy in feeling myself willing, or rather desirous to die."—This however did not now proceed from impatience, or a fear of the afflictions and sufferings of life, but from a clear evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved. After sermon they went to the house of Mr. Piers, and joined in prayer for a poor woman in deep despair:\* Then going down to her, Mr. C. Wesley asked whether she thought God was love, and not anger, as satan would persuade her? He shewed her the gospel plan of salvation; a plan founded in mercy and love to lost perishing sinners. She received what he said with all imaginable eagerness. When they had continued some time together in prayer for her, she rose up a new creature, strongly and explicitly declaring her faith in the blood of Christ, and full persuasion that she was accepted in him.

Mr. C. Wesley remained weak in body, but grew stronger daily in faith, and more zealous for God and the salvation of men, great power accompanying his exhortations and prayers. On the evening of this day, after family prayer, he expounded the Lesson, and one of the servants testified her faith in Christ and peace with God. A short time afterwards, the gardener was made a happy partaker of the same blessing. Mr. Piers also began to see the fruit of his ministerial labours. Being sent for to visit a dying woman in despair, because she "had done so little good, and so much evil;" he declared to

\* Rather in deep conviction, and having only heard a legal ministry, as the event fully shewed.

her the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and shewed her, that if she could sincerely repent and receive Christ by a living faith, God would pardon her sins and receive her graciously. This opened to her view a solid ground of comfort; she gladly renounced all confidence in herself, to trust in Jesus Christ, and she expressed her faith in him by a calm, cheerful, triumphant expectation of death. Her fears and agonies were at an end; "*being justified by faith, she had peace with God,*" and only entered farther into her rest, by dying a few hours after. The spectators of this awfully joyful scene, were melted into tears, while she calmly passed into the heavenly Canaan, and brought up a good report of her faithful pastor, who under Christ saved her soul from death.

The next day, June the 14th, Mr. C. Wesley returned to London. He staid there only two days, and then returned with T. Delamotte to Blendon, and from thence to Bexley. Here his complaints returned upon him, and he was obliged to keep his bed. "Desires of death," says he, "often rose in me, which I laboured to check, not daring to form any wish concerning it." His pains abated; and on the 21st, I find him complaining, that several days had elapsed and he had done nothing for God; so earnestly did he desire to be incessantly labouring in the work of the ministry.

In this excursion Mr. C. Wesley was very successful in doing good; but he met with strong opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, from William Delamotte, whom he calls his scholar, and from Mrs. Delamotte, who was still more violent against it than her son; both were zealous defenders of the merit of good works. Mr. Delamotte supposed, that if men were justified by faith alone, without any regard to works, then sinners, obtaining this justification and dying soon after, would be equal in heaven with those who had laboured many years in doing good and serving God. "But," said he, "it would be unjust in God to make sinners equal with us, who have laboured many years." The Jews of old



reasoned in a similar manner concerning the reception of the Gentiles into the gospel church, on the same conditions, and to the same privileges with themselves. This disposition is beautifully described, and gently reprov'd, in the parable of the prodigal son. Mr. Delamotte's conclusion, however, does not follow from the doctrine of justification by faith. As all men have sinned, so all men must be justified, or pardoned, as an act of mere grace or favour. Our state in heaven will be regulated by a different rule. All who are saved, will not be treated as equal: "*Every man will be rewarded according to his works*;" that is, according to his improvement in practical holiness, on gospel principles.

Mr. Delamotte, however, thought his conclusion good, and was animated with zeal against this new faith, as it was then commonly called. He collected his strong reasons against it, and filled two sheets of paper with them: But in searching the Scripture for passages to strengthen his arguments, he met with Titus, iii, 5: "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us.*" This passage of Scripture cut him to the heart,—destroyed all confidence in the specious reasoning he had used on this subject, and convinced him he was wrong. He burned his papers, and began to seek in earnest that faith which he had before opposed.

June the 30th, Mr. C. Wesley received from him the following letter.

"DEAR SIR,

"God hath heard your prayers. Yesterday about twelve, he put his *fat* to the desires of his distressed servant; and, glory be to Him, I have enjoyed the fruits of his Holy Spirit ever since. The only uneasiness I feel, is, want of thankfulness and love for so unspeakable a gift. But I am confident of this also, that the same gracious hand which hath communicated, will communicate even unto the end.—O my

dear friend, I am free indeed ! I agonized some time between darkness and light ; but God was greater than my heart, and burst the cloud, and broke down the partition-wall, and opened to me the door of faith ”

Upon Mr. John Wesley's arrival in London, it was his desire to preach in a church, rather than any other place. But this he seldom could do. The same obstructions were in the way that had before shut the doors of so many churches against him. Rather, the offence was now increased : The people flocked to hear him more than ever. Present salvation by faith, which he now preached every where with zeal, though a principal doctrine of the Church of England, was little understood and less approved. But as he had the will, so the Providence of God gave him the means, of testifying the Gospel. His own little society was now increased to thirty-two persons ; and many other religious communities, in various parts of the town, received him gladly. Newgate was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country also, visited Oxford, and preached to the prisoners in the castle. Being thus, to use St. Paul's words, “ *instant in season, and out of season ;* ” embracing every opportunity that offered, of publicly declaring the truth, and of enforcing it also, in every company, and to every individual with whom he conversed ; it could not be, but many reports would be spread concerning him, in every place. The effect, as of old, was, “ *some said, He is a good man ; and others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people : And the multitude was divided.* ”

The points he chiefly insisted on, were four : FIRST, That orthodoxy, (or right opinions,) is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all : That neither does religion consist in *negatives*, in bare harmlessness of any kind ; nor merely in *externals*, doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety, (so called,) or of charity : That it is nothing short of, or different from, “ *the*

*mind that was in Christ,*" the image of God stamped upon the heart, inward righteousness attended with "*the peace of God,*" and "*joy in the Holy Ghost.*"—SECONDLY, That the only way under heaven to this religion, is, to "*repent and believe the Gospel,*" or (as the Apostle words it,) "*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*"—THIRDLY, That by this faith, "*he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousness :*" He is "*justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.*"—And, LASTLY, That, "*being justified by faith,*" we taste of the heaven to which we are going ; we are holy and happy ; we tread down sin and fear, and "*sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.*"

Many of those who heard this, began to cry out, that he brought strange things to their ears ; that this was a doctrine which they never heard before, or, at least, never regarded. "*They searched the Scriptures, whether these things were so ;*" and acknowledged "*the truth as it is in Jesus.*" Their hearts also were influenced, as well as their understandings, and they determined to follow "*Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*"

But while Mr. Wesley thus strove to be a worker together with God, to

Catch the brands out of the fire,  
To snatch them from the verge of hell,

he did not neglect himself. Receiving a letter from a friend concerning the marks of true conversion, he determined more closely to "*examine himself, whether he was in the faith.*"

"The surest test," says he, "whereby we can examine ourselves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul : '*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.*'

"FIRST.—His judgments are new : His judgment of himself, of happiness, and of holiness.

“ He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God. To have no good thing abiding in him ; but all that is corrupt and abominable : In a word, to be wholly ‘ *earthly, sensual, and devilish* ;’ a motley mixture of beast and devil.

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Again. His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure, (so called,) or, indeed, in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those ‘ *rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.*’

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Yet, again. His judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing ;—to consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul ; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart ; an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of Him that created it.

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ SECONDLY.—His designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life ; but to regain the image of God ; to have the life of God again planted in his soul ; and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness.

“ This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“THIRDLY.—His desires are new, and, indeed, the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love, and joy, and hope; his sorrow, and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.

“I dare not say, I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often arise in my heart. But they do not reign. I put them all under my feet, ‘*through Christ which strengtheneth me.*’ Therefore I believe he is creating me anew in this also; and that he has begun, though not finished, his work.

“FOURTHLY.—His conversation is new. It is always ‘*seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers.*’

“So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

“FIFTHLY.—His actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. ‘*Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does,*’ it either springs from, or leads to, the love of God and man.

“Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.”

Hearing that Mr. Whitefield was returned from Georgia, he hastened to London to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other clergymen now united with them, being convinced that the *New Doctrine*, vulgarly called *Methodism*, was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible, and of the Church of England.

An instance of the fervency of this little band of Christian soldiers, will not perhaps be displeasing. Being assembled together with several others on the 1st of January, 1738, they continued in prayer till the night was far spent. “About three in the morning,” says he, “the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceed-

ing joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, ‘*We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.*’ ”

To awaken a drowsy, careless world, sunk in sin and sensuality, the Lord at this time was pleased to work in an extraordinary manner. In several places while Mr. Wesley was expounding the Scriptures, many persons trembled and fell down before him. Some cried aloud, and others appeared convulsed, as in the agonies of death. Many of these were afterwards eminent possessors of the holiness and happiness of religion; and declared, that they had at the time above mentioned such a deep sense of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the just wages of it, that they were constrained to cry aloud for the disquietude of their heart. In others the change which the Scripture speaks of, as evidencing a true conversion, was not so apparent: While in some, neither godly sorrow for sin, peace or joy in believing, nor any real change of heart and life, followed the impressions which were then made upon them.

Mr. Wesley at this time maturely compared these appearances of things with the word of God, and especially with the work of the Spirit of God on the souls of men as described in the word. He thereby clearly saw, that every religious pang, much less any enthusiastic conceit, must not be taken for true conversion. At the same time he perceived, from several passages both of the Old and New Testament, that the operations of the Spirit of God have occasionally produced such lively and powerful actings of the passions of fear, sorrow, joy, and love, as must necessarily have caused at the time considerable agitations of the body. He also knew that several of the Fathers of the church in the three first centuries, spoke often of such a work among the people.\*

\* The words of the great John Chrysostom are remarkable. Comment on Romans viii, 15. “*Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry.*

Nor was he ignorant, that in our own land, since the Reformation, when the violations of the laws of God, the atonement of Christ, and the remission of sins have been preached with "*the demonstration of the Spirit and of power,*" such impressions have been made thereby, in innumerable instances, that even the body seemed to fail before them.†

Yet it is certain, that throughout the whole of his life he wished that all things should be done, even in the opinion of men, decently and in order. But he had one only design, which was to bring men to that knowledge and love of God, which makes them holy and happy: Useful in their lives, and peaceful in their death. He therefore thankfully acquiesced in every means which the Lord was pleased to use for the accomplishment of this great end. And when he saw those extraordinary effects accompanied by a godly sorrow for sin, and earnest desires to be delivered from it; when he saw men deeply convinced of the want of a Saviour, and this conviction followed by humble loving faith in the Son of God, enabling them to walk worthy of the Lord who had called them to his kingdom and glory, he therein rejoiced: Nor could the imprudent zeal of a few, or the noise and confusion which sometimes attended this extraordinary work, cause him to relax in his efforts to turn men "*from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God.*"

The reasoning of a writer of that day, by no means prejudiced in his favour, is well worthy of consideration. "What

*Abba, Father!*"—"This is the first word we utter," says he, "*μετα τας θαυμασας ωδινας, εκεινας, και τον ξενον παραδοξον λοχευματων νομον: after those amazing throes, (or birth-pangs,) and that strange and wonderful manner of bringing forth.*"

† The instance of that learned, laborious, and successful minister of the Church of England, Mr. Bolton, is well known. He was awakened by the preaching of the celebrated Mr. Perkins in the University of Cambridge; and was affected with such terrors, as caused him to throw himself on the ground, and roar with inexpressible anguish; yea, sometimes he lay pale and senseless like one that was dead.

influence," says he, "sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body, I pretend not to explain. But I make no question satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction."

About this time he wrote several letters to his friends on the Continent, giving them an account of the work of God in England. That to Count Zinzendorf, and to the Moravian Church, I shall insert, as I shall have to speak of both hereafter.

"TO COUNT ZINZENDORF, *at Maricborn.*

"May our gracious Lord, who counteth whatsoever is done to the least of his brethren, as done to himself, return seven-fold to you and the Countess, and to all the brethren, the kindnesses you did to us! It would have been a great satisfaction to me, if I could have spent more time with the Christians who love one another. But that could not be now; my Master having called me to work in another part of his vineyard. Nor did I return hither at all before the time: For though a great door and effectual had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling-blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed: And thence had sprung anger, clamour, bitterness, evil-speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil-surmises; whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that '*of the rest durst no man join himself to them.*'

"But it has now pleased our blessed Master to remove, in great measure, these rocks of offence. The word of the Lord again runs and is glorified; and his work goes on and prospers. Great multitudes are every where awakened, and cry



out, ‘ *What must we do to be saved?*’ Many of them see, that there is only one name under heaven whereby they can be saved: And more and more of those who seek it, find salvation in his name: And these are of one heart and one soul. They all love one another, and are knit together in one body, and one spirit, as in one faith, and one hope of their calling. The love and zeal of our brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Hernhuth, has stirred up many among us, who will not be comforted till they also partake of the great and precious promises. I hope, if God permit, to see them at least once more, were it only to give them the fruit of my love, the speaking freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them. May our merciful Lord give you a right judgment in all things, and make you to abound more and more in all lowliness and meekness, in all simplicity and godly sincerity, in all watchfulness and seriousness: In a word, in all faith and love, particularly to those that are without; till you are merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful! I desire your constant and earnest prayers, that he would vouchsafe me a portion of the same spirit.”\*

“To the Church of God which is in Hernhuth, JOHN WESLEY, an unworthy Presbyterian of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. October 14, 1738.

“Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eyewitness of your faith, and love, and holy conversation in Christ

\* Mr. Southey relates a foolish story, from Mr. Hampson, about the Count, “who,” he says, “considered Mr. Wesley as his pupil, ordering him to dig in his garden, and taking him from his work, without a coat, to visit a German Count, saying, ‘You must be simple, my brother.’” I am confident there is no truth at all in the story. The Count was a gentleman, and would not act so, neither did he consider Mr. Wesley as his pupil; and Mr. Wesley understood Christian simplicity, and propriety, too well to suffer himself to be so treated.

Jesus. I have borne testimony thereof with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God by many on your behalf.

“We are endeavouring here also, by the grace which is given us, to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen were added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands of men, consisting of fifty-six persons, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet we have only two small bands of women, the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them, how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of Him who gave himself for them.

“Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet, thanks be to God, there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise every evening, and on set evenings in the week at two several places, we publish the word of reconciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hundred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer: And we know that our Lord heareth our prayer, having more than once or twice, (and this was not done in a corner,) received our petitions in that very hour

“Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England, who lay the right foundation, ‘*The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.*’ Over and above whom, I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

“O cease not, ye that are highly favoured, to beseech our Lord that he would be with us even to the end; to remove that which is displeasing in his sight, to support that which is weak among us, to give us the whole mind that was in him,

and teach us to walk even as he walked ! And may the very God of peace fill up what is wanting in your faith, and build you up more and more in all lowliness of mind, in all plainness of speech, in all zeal and watchfulness ; that he may present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that ye may be holy and unblameable in the day of his appearing.”

The progress of Mr. C. Wesley, previous to this time, remains to be noted. We have seen that he had been diligent in his Master's service, though as yet he had not been able to preach. On Sunday, July 2nd, 1738, he observes, “ Being to preach this morning, for the first time, I received strength for the work of the ministry. The whole service at Basingshaw Church, was wonderfully animating, especially the Gospel, concerning the miraculous draught of fishes. I preached salvation by faith to a deeply attentive audience, and afterwards gave the cup. Observing a woman full of reverence, I asked her if she had forgiveness of sins ? she answered with great sweetness and humility, ‘ Yes, I know it now, that I have forgiveness.’ ” Nothing short of this could *now* satisfy him as a guide of souls.

“ I preached again at London-Wall, without fear or weariness. As I was going into the church, a woman caught hold of my hand and blessed me most heartily, telling me she had received forgiveness of sins while I was preaching in the morning.” In the evening they held a meeting for prayer, when two other persons found peace with God.

July 10th, Mr. C. Wesley, was requested by the Rev. Mr. Sparks, to go to Newgate : he went and preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death. But he observes, it was with a heavy heart. “ My old prejudices,” says he, “ against the possibility of a death-bed repentance, still hung upon me, and I could hardly hope there was mercy for those whose time was so short.” But in the midst of his languid discourse, as he calls it, his mind acquired a sudden confidence in the

mercy of God, and he promised them all pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would even then, as at the last hour, repent and believe the gospel. He adds, "I did believe they would accept the proffered mercy, and could not help telling them, I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them." See here the faith that gave those ministers of Christ such a harvest of souls among those who were *dead in sin*! He preached to them again the next day, with earnestness, from the second Lesson, when two or three began to be deeply affected.

This day Mr. C. Wesley received a letter from Mr. William Delamotte, giving an account of his mother. "I cannot hold my peace," says he; "the mercies of God come so abundantly on our unworthy family, that I am not able to declare them. Yet as they are his blessings through your ministry, I must inform you of them, as they will strengthen your hands, and prove helpers of your joy.—Great then, I believe, was the struggle in my mother, between nature and grace; but God, who knoweth the very heart and reins, hath searched her out. Her spirit is become as that of a little child. She is converted, and Christ hath spoken peace to her soul. This change was begun in her the morning you left us, (the 8th,) though she concealed it from you. The next morning when she waked, the following words of Scripture were present to her mind: '*Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one of them, doth not light a candle and sweep the house diligently till she find it?*' She rose immediately, took up Bishop Tayler, and opened on a place which so strongly asserted this living faith, that she was fully convinced. But the enemy preached humility to her, that she could not deserve [deserve pardon!] so great a gift. God, however, still pursued, and she could not long forbear to communicate the emotion of her soul to me. We prayed, read, and conversed for an hour. The Lord made use of a mean instrument to convince her of her ignorance of

the word of God. Throughout that day, she was more and more enlightened by the truth, till at length she broke out, ‘Where have I been? I know nothing; I see nothing; my mind is all darkness; how have I opposed the Scripture!’ She was tempted to think, she was labouring after something that was not to be attained; but Christ did not suffer her to fall; she flew to him in prayer and singing, and continued agonizing all the evening. The next morning, when reading in her closet, she received reconciliation and peace. She could not contain the joy attending it; nor forbear imparting to her friends and neighbours, that *she had found the piece which she had lost*. Satan in vain attempted to shake her; she felt in herself,

Faith’s assurance, Hope’s increase,  
All the confidence of Love.”

Mr. Sparks asked him if he would preach at St. Helen’s. He agreed to supply Mr. Broughton’s place, who was at Oxford, “arming our friends,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “against the faith.” He adds, “I preached faith in Christ to a vast congregation, with great boldness, adding much extempore.” Mr. C. Wesley proposed the doctrines of the gospel with clearness, and illustrated them with great strength, from the Scriptures, in which he was mighty. After this sermon, Mrs. Hind, with whom Mr. Broughton lodged, sent for Mr. C. Wesley, and acknowledged her agreement with the doctrine he had preached; she wished him to come and talk with Mr. Broughton, who, she thought, must himself agree to it.

The next day, July 12th, he preached at Newgate to the condemned felons. He visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever, a poor Black, who had robbed his master. “I told him,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “of one who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular. I

described the sufferings of the Son of God; his sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment. The tears trickled down his cheeks, while he cried, ‘What! was it for *me*? Did the Son of God suffer all ‘this for so poor a creature as *me*?’ I left him waiting for the salvation of God.

“July 13th.—I read prayers and preached at Newgate, and administered the sacrament to our friends and five of the felons. I was much affected and assisted in prayer for them with comfort and confidence.

“July 14th.—I received the sacrament from the Ordinary, and spake strongly to the poor malefactors, and to the sick Negro in the condemned hole: I was moved by his sorrow and earnest desire of Christ Jesus.

“The next day, July 15th, I preached there again, with an enlarged heart; and rejoiced with my poor Black, who now believes that the Son of God loves *him*, and gave himself for *him*.

“July 17th.—I preached at Newgate on death, which the malefactors must suffer, the day after to-morrow. Mr. Sparks assisted in giving the sacrament, and another clergyman was present. Newington asked me to go in the coach with him. At one o’clock, I was with the Black in his cell, when more of the malefactors came to us. I found great help and power in prayer for them. One of them rose all in a sweat, with the agitation of his mind, and professed faith in Christ. I found myself overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners. The Negro was quite happy, and another criminal in an excellent temper. I talked with one more, concerning faith in Christ; he was greatly moved. The Lord, I trust, will help his unbelief also.”—The clergymen now left them, and Mr. Wesley, with several others, joined in fervent prayer and thanksgiving at Mr. Bray’s. At six in the evening, he returned to the prisoners, with Mr. Bray. They talked chiefly with Hudson and Newington. They prayed with them, and

both seemed deeply affected. Newington declared, that he had some time before felt inexpressible joy and love in prayer, but was much troubled at its being so soon withdrawn.

Mr. C. Wesley goes on : “ July 18th, the Ordinary read prayers and preached ; I administered the sacrament to the Black and eight more ; having first instructed them in the nature of it. One of them told me in the cells, that whenever he offered to pray, or had a serious thought, something came and hindered him, and that it was almost continually with him. After we had prayed for him, he rose amazingly comforted ; full of joy and love ; so that we could not doubt, but he had received the atonement.” In the evening, Mr. C. Wesley and Mr. Bray were locked in the cells. “ We wrestled,” says he, “ in mighty prayer : All the criminals were present, and cheerful. The soldier, in particular, found his comfort and joy increase every moment. Another, from the time he communicated, has been in perfect peace. Joy was visible in all their faces.—We sang,

Behold the Saviour of mankind  
Nail'd to the shameful tree ;  
How vast the love that him inclin'd,  
To bleed and die for thee !

It was one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known. Yet, on July 19th, I rose very heavy and backward to visit them for the last time. At six in the morning, I prayed and sung with them alltogether. The Ordinary would read prayers ; and he preached, but alas ! most miserably.” Mr. Sparks and Mr. Broughton were present ; the latter of whom administered the sacrament, and then prayed ; Mr. C. Wesley prayed after him. At half-past nine o'clock their irons were knocked off, their hands tied, and they prepared for the solemn journey and the fatal hour. The clergymen went in a coach, and about eleven the criminals arrived at Tyburn. Mr. C. Wesley, Mr. Sparks, and Mr. Broughton got upon the

cart with them; the Ordinary endeavoured to follow, but the poor prisoners begged that he would not, and the mob kept him down. They were all cheerful; full of comfort, peace, and triumph; firmly persuaded that Christ had died for them,—had taken away their sins, and waited to receive them into paradise. None shewed any natural terror of death; no fear, or crying. “I never saw,” says Mr. C. Wesley, such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns: particularly,

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
 Into thy hands I fall;  
 Be Thou my life, my righteousness,  
 My Jesus, and my all.

I took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bid them not to be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied, they should not. We left them, going to meet their Lord. They were turned off exactly at twelve o'clock; not one struggled for life. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd, and returned full of peace and confidence of our friends' happiness.—“The whole of this awful scene must have appeared very extraordinary in that day. Blessed be God, the sight of penitent culprits has been common since that time.

Mr. C. Wesley, by the daily exercise of preaching, expounding, exhorting, and praying with the people, had now acquired some degree of boldness in public speaking; the great and leading doctrines of the Gospel were become familiar to his mind, and expression flowed naturally and easily, in conversing on them. He preached at Islington, October 15th, and added to his notes a good deal *extempore*. On Friday, the 20th, seeing few people present at St. Antholin's, he thought of preaching *extempore*. “I was afraid,” says he, “yet ventured, trusting in the promise, ‘*Lo! I am with you always.*’ I spoke on justification, from the third chapter of the Epistle



to the Romans, for three quarters of an hour, without hesitation. Glory be to God, who keepeth his promise for ever."

About this time, previously to his brother's going to Bristol, they waited on Dr. Gibson, the Bishop of London, to answer the complaints which he had heard alleged against them, respecting their preaching an *absolute assurance of salvation*. Some of the Bishop's words were, "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I do not see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance.—"They answered, "We do contend for this;\* but we have been charged with Antinomianism, because we preach *justification by faith alone*. Can any one preach otherwise, who agrees with our Church and the Scriptures?"—"But," said the Bishop, "there is a very heavy charge brought against us Bishops, in consequence of your having re-baptized an adult, and alleged the Archbishop's authority for doing it."—Mr. John Wesley answered, that he had expressly declared the contrary, and acquitted the Archbishop from having any hand in the matter; but added, "If a person, dissatisfied with Lay-Baptism, should desire Episcopal, I should think it my duty to administer it, after having acquainted the Bishop, according to the Canon."—"Well," said the Bishop, "I am against it myself, when any one has had baptism among the Dissenters."—The Bishop here shewed more liberality than some in our day. Mr. Charles Wesley adds, "My brother enquired whether his reading in a religious society made it a conventicle? His Lordship warily referred us to the laws: but, on urging the question, 'Are religious societies conventicles?', he answered, 'No; I think not; however, you can read the acts and laws

\* Certainly they did. All *believers* in their walk with God must thus examine themselves. But no man was ever *justified* thus: This would be justification by works, which is impossible to a sinner.

‘as well as I; I determine nothing.’ We hoped his Lordship would not, henceforward, receive an accusation against a Presbyter, but at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He said, ‘No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times.’ We thanked him and took our leave.”

Tuesday, November 14th, Mr. Charles Wesley had another conference with the Bishop of London, without his brother. “I have used your Lordship’s permission,” said he, “to wait upon you. A woman desires me to baptize her, not being satisfied with her baptism by a Dissenter. She says, sure and unsure is not the same. He immediately took fire and interrupted me: ‘I wholly disapprove of it; it is irregular.’” “My Lord,” said Mr. C. Wesley, “I did not expect your approbation; I only came in obedience to give you notice of my intention. ‘It is irregular; I never receive any such information, but from the minister.’—My Lord, your rubric does not so much as require the minister to give you notice, but any discreet person. I have the minister’s leave.—‘Who gave you authority to baptize?’—Your Lordship, and I shall exercise it in any part of the known world.—‘Are you a licensed Curate?’—I have the leave of the proper minister. ‘But, do you not know, that no man can exercise parochial duty in London, without my leave? It is only *sub silentio*.’—But you know, many do take that *permission* for authority, and you yourself allow it.—‘It is one thing to connive, and another to approve; I have power to inhibit you.’—Does your Lordship exert that power? Do you now inhibit me?—‘O why will you push matters to an extreme? I do not inhibit you.’—Why then, my Lord, according to your own concession, you permit or authorise me.—‘I have power to punish and to forbear.’—To punish! That seems to imply that I have done something worthy of punishment; I should be glad to know, that I may answer. Does your Lordship charge me with any crime?—‘No, no, I charge you with no crime.’—Do you then dispense with my giving you notice

‘of any Baptisms in future?—‘I neither dispense, nor not ‘dispense.’ He censured *Lawrence on Lay-Baptism*, and blamed my brother’s sermon, as inclining to Antinomianism.\* I charged Archbishop Tillotson with denying the faith; he allowed it, and owned they ran into one extreme to avoid another. He concluded the conference with, ‘Well, Sir, ‘you knew my judgment before, and you know it now: Good ‘morning to you.’”

Mr. C. Wesley now clearly saw, that a faithful discharge of his duty would expose him to many hardships and dangers; and though he generally had great confidence in God, yet he was fully sensible of his weakness, and that he must be supported in his work by a power not his own. On the 25th of November, at Oxford, he experienced great depression of mind. “I felt,” says he, “a pining desire to die, foreseeing the infinite dangers and troubles of life.” But, as he was daily engaged in the exercise of some part or other of his ministerial office, “*the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord*” frequently returned upon him; his strength was renewed, and he was again enabled to go on his way rejoicing.

Mr. Whitefield was at this time at Oxford, and was earnest with Mr. C. Wesley to accept a College Living. This shews that no plan of Itinerant preaching was yet thought of: Had any such plan been in agitation among them, it is very certain Mr. Whitefield would not have urged this advice on Mr. C. Wesley, whom he loved as a brother, and whose labours he highly esteemed.

December the 11th, Mr. C. Wesley left Oxford, and coming to Wickham in the evening, took up his lodgings with a Mr. Hollis, to whom, I suppose, he had been recommended without sufficient caution. “He entertained me,” adds Mr. Wesley, “with his French Prophets, who, in his account, are equal, if not superior, to the Prophets of the Old Testament.

\* *Salvation by faith.* Eph. ii. 8. Preached before the University.

While we were undressing, he fell into violent agitations, and gabbled like a turkey-cock. I was frightened, and began exorcising him with ‘Thou deaf and dumb devil,’ &c. He soon recovered from his fit of inspiration. I prayed and went to bed, not half liking my bed-fellow; nor did I sleep very sound with Satan so near me.” He escaped, however, without harm, and came safe to London the next day, where he heard a glorious account of the success of the Gospel at Islington, (where Mr. Stonehouse was minister,) some of the fierce opposers being converted.

January 5th, 1739, Mr. Wesley gives us another convincing proof, that no plan of becoming *Itinerants*, was yet formed. He says, “My brother, Mr. Seward, Hall, Whitefield, Ingham, Kinchin, and Hutchins, all set upon me to settle at Oxford.”—But he could not agree to their proposal, without being more fully satisfied that it was the order of Providence. This advice, however, and a similar instance above-mentioned, plainly shew, that their views at present extended no further than to preach the Gospel in the Churches, wherever they had opportunity.

About this time, some persons, being greatly affected under the public service, fell into violent convulsive motions, accompanied with loud and dismal cries. This gave great offence to many, and occasioned disputes. Mr. Charles Wesley mentions this circumstance in his Journal on the 10th of January. “At the Society,” says he, “we had some discourse about agitations; no sign of grace, in my humble opinion.” Certainly, not an infallible sign. But conviction for sin, and the process of conversion by the grace of God, may greatly agitate a weak frame.

February 21st, Mr. C. Wesley and his brother thought it prudent to wait on Dr. Potter, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to prevent any ill impression which the various false reports of their proceedings might produce on his mind. “He shewed us,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “great affection: Spoke

mildly of Mr. Whitefield; cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our defence; to forbear exceptionable phrases; to keep to the doctrines of the church.—We told him, we expected persecution would abide by the Church till her Articles and Homilies were repealed.—He assured us, he knew of no design, in the Governors of the the Church, to innovate; and neither should there be any innovation while he lived. He avowed justification by faith alone; and signified his gladness to see us, as often as we pleased.” The Archbishop also warned them, as Mr. John Wesley informed me, to preach and enforce only the essentials of religion. “Other things,” said he, “time and the providence of God only can cure.” Mr. Wesley never forgot this.

“From him,” continues Mr. Wesley, “we went to the Bishop of London; who denied that he had condemned us, or even heard much concerning us. He said Mr. Whitefield’s Journal was tainted with enthusiasm, though he himself was a pious well-meaning youth. He warned us against Antinomianism, and dismissed us kindly.

“March 28th. We strove to dissuade my brother from going to Bristol, to which he was pressingly invited, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him.”

# THE LIFE

OF THE

## REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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### BOOK THE FOURTH.

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#### CHAPTER I.

THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF ITINERANCY AND FIELD-PREACHING. — THE STATE OF THE NATION AT THAT TIME, WITH RESPECT TO RELIGION.

WE are now come to the period when those devoted servants of God were called to follow Him, in a new and untried way, the way of Itinerancy. To give the reader a view of that which led to the adoption of this strange way of being more entirely conformed to the Son of God, it will be needful to state some particulars. It has been well observed by Mr. Watson, an able apologist of Mr. Wesley and of Methodism, “That it would be difficult to fix upon a more interesting spectacle than that which is presented in the progress of the mind of Mr. Wesley, through all its deep and serious agitations, doubts, difficulties, hopes, and fears, from his earliest religious awakenings, to the moment when he found that steadfast peace which never afterwards forsook him, but gave serenity to his countenance, and cheerfulness to his heart, to the last moment of a prolonged life. These great consider-

ations must force themselves upon all but the lightest minds, when the history of a heart so impressed and influenced is candidly and honestly laid open. Many persons have been the subjects of these inward conflicts, but they have been seldom brought forth from the recesses of the hearts which they have so variously agitated. It is, however, an important truth, allowed by that people who call that eminent servant of God, their Father in the Gospel, that all such accounts are to be carefully subordinated to the Holy Scriptures; but they often prove instructive and invaluable comments upon them."

Mr. Wesley has made this full disclosure, and it is the true key, not to his theological system only, but also to his public conduct. The range of his enquiry in his search after truth, and after that happiness which he knew, from the Holy Scriptures, was only to be found in God, is truly astonishing. His appointment to be a Fellow of Lincoln College, which, according to its foundation, was instituted "to educate and support ministers who should pull down all heresies, and establish the Catholic faith," seems strikingly appropriate to such a character. In this great and comprehensive enquiry, one great principle fixed itself in his mind,—"*Without holiness NO MAN shall see the Lord.*" The love of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, through the Divine atonement, is the true and only principle of this holiness; and with this love, the love of the world, (which is as natural to fallen man as breathing,) is totally incompatible. We have seen his efforts to conquer, and even root out this love, while surrounded by those things which naturally feed it; and we have seen, that even those great efforts were incompetent to the task. The wilds of America offered a refuge from this hitherto unconquerable evil; and he hoped, in the sincerity of his heart, that such an abandonment would prove its destruction. But he found the truth of the old heathen's remark, "*Cælum non animam*

*mutant, qui trans mare currunt.*"\* And like the Fathers, who retired into the desert, he was forced to lament, "Alas ! I have left all the world, but I find I have brought my old heart with me."

But a mind so sincere could not be forsaken. The Lord led him, while making this sacrifice, into the company of some who had found the true way of overcoming this evil disease,—not by forcing it out of the soul, and thus vainly attempting to form a vacuum in the spirit of man, but by "*bringing in the love of God, as having first loved us,*"—the spirit of health, peace, and victory, purchased for us by the Divine atonement of the Son of God, and to be *now* received in "*that new and living way,*" the "*way of faith.*" Decision of character must be allowed him, even by superficial observers. Even while groaning under the spirit of bondage, he could say with the Apostle, "*I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound ; every where and in every thing I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need.*" How much more, when "*delivered out of the horrible pit,*" and with "*his feet set upon the rock, and his goings established,*" he could say,

" I nothing want beneath, above,  
" Happy, happy in thy love."

It could not be that such a faith, "*the faith of God's elect, the faith that overcometh the world, and that worketh by love,*" could look upon the perishing children of men, but "*with the bowels of Jesus Christ, the author of that faith.*" The word of the Lord was as a fire within him, and "*the love of Christ constrained him, while he*" also "*thus judged, That if One died for all, then were all dead,—and that He died for all, that all who live should not live unto themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again.*"

Mr. Southey has indulged what might be called a sneer at the

\* They change their climate, not their mind, who pass over the sea.



supposition, that eminent men, in the various religious communities, were raised up by a special Providence. But even when, in any given case, the fruits and effects have not warranted the supposition,—still what a small mistake is this, when compared with that cold, and, in many cases, that infidel philosophy, that would exclude the Governor of the world from the care of his creatures; or represent the Divine Redeemer, *upon whose shoulders is that government*, as set down indeed on the eternal throne, after “*having trod the wine-press of the wrath of God*” in our behalf,—yet, like the God of Epicurus, the idol of man’s slothful imagination, no longer concerned for the souls of men, “*which he had purchased with his own blood!*”—Or that would, like Warburton, represent the Divine Spirit, as having given us a book containing perfectly “*the truth as it is in Jesus*,” yet leaving the application of that truth to the fallen spirit of man,—to “*that carnal mind which is enmity against God, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*” Such readers of the lives of such men of God, may indeed judge that truth which shall judge them; but others will joyfully adore the wisdom and love of Him who has never “*left himself without witness*,” who still “*draws us with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man*,” who did not suffer such a burning and a shining light to be hid in the wilds of Georgia; who said to his servants, thus prepared, “*Behold I have set before you an open door, and no man shall shut it.*” This word has stood the test of more than fourscore years, and its fruits testify its origin. This door the Lord had given him eyes to see, and also a heart to encounter all the bars and fences which inclosed and surrounded it. The eyes and heart with which he contemplated the work thus set before him, with its attendant dangers, will be best seen and appreciated, by giving the account in his own words. In his “Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,” while contending for the truth against almost the whole nation, he thus speaks:

“Although it is with us a *‘very small thing to be judged of you, or of man’s judgment,’* seeing we know God will *‘make our innocency as clear as the light, and our just dealing as the noon-day;’* yet are we ready to give to any that are willing to hear, a plain account both of our principles and actions: *‘As having renounced the hidden things of shame, and desiring nothing more, ‘than by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.’*

“We see, (and who does not?) the numberless follies and miseries of our fellow-creatures. We see on every side, either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight, and should greatly rejoice, if by any means we might convince some, that there is a better religion to be attained, a religion worthy of God that gave it. And this we conceive to be no other than LOVE; *the love of God, and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved us,* as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

“This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness, going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God, and, at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory

Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind;  
Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign’d;  
Desires compos’d, affections ever even,  
Tears that delight, and sighs that wait to heaven.

“This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of *‘love, and joy, and peace,’* having its seat in the

heart, in the inmost soul, but ever shewing itself, by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence, (for *'love worketh no ill to his neighbour,'*) but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it.

"This religion we have been following after for many years, as many know, if they would testify: But all this time, seeking wisdom, we found it not; we were spending our strength in vain. And being now under full conviction of this, we declare it to all mankind: For we desire not that others should wander out of the way, as we have done before them; but rather that they may profit by our loss, that they go (though we did not, having no man to guide us,) the straight way to the religion of love, even *by faith*.

"Now faith (supposing the Scripture to be of God,) is *πραγματων ελεγχος η βλεπομενων*, the *demonstrative evidence of things unseen*, the supernatural evidence of things invisible, not perceivable by eyes of flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Faith is that Divine evidence, whereby the spiritual man discerneth God, and the things of God. It is with regard to the spiritual world, what sense is with regard to the natural. It is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is *'born of God.'*

"Perhaps you have not considered it in this view; I will then explain it a little further.

"Faith, according to the scriptural account, is the eye of the new-born soul. Hereby every true believer in God, *'seeth Him who is invisible.'* Hereby, (in a more particular manner, since life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel,) he *'seeth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;'* and, *'beholdeth what manner of love it is, which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we (who are born of the Spirit,) should be called the sons of God.'*

"It is the ear of the soul, whereby a sinner *'hears the voice*

of the Son of God and lives ;' even that voice which alone wakes the dead, '*Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.*'

"It is, (if I may be allowed the expression,) the palate of the soul: For hereby the believer '*tastes the good word of God,*' and '*the powers of the world to come ;*' and hereby he both tastes and sees that God is gracious, vea and merciful to him a sinner.

"It is the feeling of the soul, whereby a believer perceives, through '*the power of the highest over-shadowing him,*' both the existence, and the presence of Him, in whom '*he lives, and moves, and has his being ;*' and indeed, the whole invisible world, the entire system of things eternal. And hereby in particular he feels '*the love of God shed abroad in his heart.*'

" '*By this faith we are saved*' from all uneasiness of mind, from the anguish of *a wounded spirit*, from discontent, from fear, and sorrow of heart, and from that inexpressible listlessness, and weariness, both of the world and of ourselves, under which we had so helplessly laboured for many years; especially when we were out of the hurry of the world, and sunk into calm reflection. In this we find that love of God, and of all mankind, which we had elsewhere sought in vain. This, we know and feel, and therefore cannot but declare, saves every one that partakes of it, both from sin and misery. from every unhappy and every unholy temper.

Soft peace she brings, wherever she arrives,  
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives;  
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,  
And opens in each breast a little heaven.

If you ask, 'Why then have not all men this faith? All at least who conceive it to be so happy a thing? Why do they not believe immediately?'

"We answer, (on the Scripture hypothesis) '*It is the gift of God.*' No man is able to work it in himself. It is a work

of Omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation, and none can create a soul a-new but He who at first created the heavens and the earth.

“ May not your own experience teach you this? Can you give yourself this faith? Is it now in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God? Have you already, or can you raise in yourself any perception of God, or of an invisible world? I suppose you do not deny that there is an invisible world: you will not charge it in poor old *Hesiod*, to Christian prejudice of education, when he says, in those well-known words,

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, whether we wake, or if we sleep.

Now is there any power in your soul, whereby you discern either these, or Him that created them? Or can all your wisdom and strength open an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits? Is it in your power to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity? You know, it is not. You not only do not, but cannot (by your own strength,) thus believe. The more you labour so to do, the more you will be convinced ‘*it is the gift of God.*’

“ It is the gift of God, which he bestows not on those who are worthy of his favour, not on such who are previously holy, and so fit to be crowned with all the blessings of his goodness: But on the ungodly and unholy; on those who till that hour were fit only for everlasting destruction; those in whom was *no good thing*, and whose only plea was, ‘*God be merciful to me a sinner.*’ No merit, no goodness in man precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us, but a sense of mere sin and misery; and to all who see, and feel, and own their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives Faith, for the sake of *Him in whom he is always well pleased.*

“ We grant nothing is more unreasonable, than to imagine that such mighty effects as these can be wrought by that poor, empty, insignificant thing which the world calls FAITH, and you among them. But supposing there be such a faith on the earth, as that which the Apostle speaks of, such an intercourse between God and the soul, what is too hard for such a faith? You yourselves may conceive, that ‘*all things are possible to him that thus believeth.*’ To him that thus walks with God, that is now a citizen of heaven, an inhabitant of eternity. If therefore you will contend with us, you must change the ground of your attack. You must flatly deny, there is any faith upon earth; but perhaps this you might think too large a step. You cannot do this without a secret condemnation in your own breast. O that you would at length cry to God for that heavenly gift! whereby alone this truly reasonable religion, this beneficent love of God and man can be planted in your heart.”

It could not be expected, that a minister of Christ thus impressed, and who had known what it was to pass from “*the death of sin to the life of righteousness,*” would ultimately bury himself in the recesses of a College, or be satisfied with the mere rounds of parochial duty. Beholding *the world lying in the wicked one*, and knowing that he possessed, by the free grace and mercy of God, a medicine for its every wound, he could not refrain from inviting all men to taste its healing power. “*Comprehending now, with all saints, the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,*” he would be constrained to proclaim that mercy which he felt to the perishing sons of men. Indeed, no man who knows what true religion is, but must see, if there be any truth in the doctrine of providential interposition, that such a man was designed by the Head of the Church to fill a larger sphere than the parish of Epworth, or any similar situation.

To judge of Mr. Wesley's conduct, we must consider, not the state of the Church of England, or of the nation, in the present day, in which the ameliorating effects of Methodism are so manifest; and of which the zealous activity of the Evangelical Clergy, (who, with all their attention to order, cannot wholly escape the opprobrium which Mr. Wesley submitted to bear,) is a full proof; but rather the awful state of the Church and the nation, when his public life commenced, of which he has himself given a fearful description in his "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion." But Mr. Southey is here an unexceptionable witness, and his statement renders it unnecessary to go to other authorities. He does not, indeed, feel like the man of God; but it is plain the humiliating picture has affected even him, while he traces, in his ninth chapter, the decay of piety in the church, especially from the time of the Restoration. He quotes the excellent Archbishop Leighton, who described the church as a fair carcase, without a spirit: In doctrine, in worship, and in the main part of its government, he thought it the best-constituted of any national church in the world, but one of the most corrupt in its administration. Bishop Burnet confirms this testimony, and declares that "the Clergy in his time had less authority, and were under more contempt, than those of any church in Europe; for they were much more remiss in their labours, and the least severe in their lives. We have this awful portrait heightened by a reference also to the importation of "a fashion for the speculative impiety of France,"—of "a shallow philosophy of home growth,"—of "the schools of dissent becoming schools of unbelief,"—of the neglect of *religious* education among the higher classes,—of the greater part of the nation being "totally uneducated,"—of their being "Christians but in name, and, for the most part, in a state of heathen, or worse than heathen ignorance." This was the state in which the two Wesleys and their co-adjutors found the church and the nation. The great evil from which all the rest flowed, was

the almost total extinction of the doctrines of the Reformation in the pulpit, and in the opinions both of the clergy and laity ; so that when they were preached by those men of God, not only on the authority of the Scriptures, but on that of the formularies of the church itself, they were regarded as absurd and dangerous novelties. The clergy were generally grossly ignorant of theology, though there were some splendid exceptions. Many of the clergy, who had made Divinity their study, were notoriously inclined to heterodoxy, respecting the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. There was something of Ultra-Calvinism, and much of frigid unevangelical Arminianism. Natural religion, so called, was the great subject of study, (when theology was studied at all,) and it was even made the test and standard of revealed truth. The doctrine of the *opus operatum* of the Papists, as to sacraments, (lately revived, and too much sanctioned in the church,) was the faith of the divines of the older school ; and a refined system of ethics, unconnected with Christian motives, and disjointed from the vital principles of religion in the heart, the favourite theory of the modern. The great body of the clergy neither knew nor cared about systems of any kind ; and, in a vast number of instances, they were immoral,—often grossly so. The populace in the large towns were ignorant and profligate ; the inhabitants of villages added, to ignorance and profligacy, brutish and barbarous manners. A more striking instance of the rapid decay of religious light and influence in a country scarcely occurs than in ours, from the Restoration till the rise of Methodism. It affected not only the church, but the dissenting sects in no ordinary degree. The Presbyterians had commenced their downward course through Arianism to Socinianism ; and those who still held the doctrines of Calvin, had, in too many instances, fallen into the fatal errors of Antinomianism. There were exceptions, but this was the general state of religion and morals in the country when the Messrs. Wesley, Whitefield, and a few kindred spirits, went forth to



sacrifice ease, reputation, and even life itself, if necessary, to produce a reformation.

We have seen how richly furnished the minds of those men were for the work which lay before them. They had the usual advantages of learning; but this was not their chief qualification. They had proved religion till it had become their happiness. They were chosen from the world, and possessed of a righteousness truly divine. They saw from the holy Scriptures, that this happiness was purchased for all men, and promised to all who should *believe* for it. *But how should they believe for that of which they did not hear?* A necessity was thus laid upon them to *preach it to all men*: and they awfully felt, that their own perseverance depended on their declaring it to others. Every parish minister, *thus called*, must act in his parish as the Messrs. Wesley now began to act in every part of the British empire, or he cannot keep the life of God. They still cleaved to the Church which they truly loved; but being shut out generally from her pulpits, they had no alternative but to become, what has been called, irregular. Their hearts bowed to the opprobrium. Here then began.

Their race of glory and their race of shame.

And here we see the man, who, while he was a pupil of the pious Law, could not see how any man could take charge of one hundred souls, had now a heart to declare, that “he looked upon all the world as his parish!” He knew and felt, that He who had quickened his dead soul, *could, of the stones, raise up children to himself*. They went forth, therefore, in his name, and God confirmed the word with signs following.

Upon the necessity of some great exertion to reclaim the nation, and upon the fruits and effects of Mr. Wesley’s labours, Mr. Southey is again an undeniable witness. The most urgent representations, the most convincing arguments, he observes, would have been disregarded in that age. The

great struggle of infidelity had not yet commenced ; and it was not then foreseen, that the very foundations of civil society would be shaken, because governments had neglected their most awful and important duty. But the present consequences of this neglect were obvious and glaring, in the rudeness of the peasantry, the brutality of the town populace, and the general deadness to religion all over the land. Trusting in the Lord, these men of God, who had first cared for their own souls, went forth, and every trial tended to strengthen and confirm them,—that they were, indeed, doing the will of God, and that the work was truly His. Sinners were converted, drunkards were reclaimed, the penitent who came in despair was sent away in hope, and often with “ *peace and joy in believing.*” These effects, Mr. Southey further observes, were public and undeniable ; and looking forward in exulting faith, Mr. Wesley doubted not that a general reformation would be accomplished, and also the fulfilment of those prophecies which assure us, that “ *the kingdom of God our Father shall come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*” How the Lord would bring this about, he knew not. He did not dare to speculate or contrive : it would have been contrary to the faith he had received. His only care was, never to go beyond the plain duty of the day, or depart in any wise from the word of Him whom he served. All minor considerations were swallowed up in this—God, he believed, had called him to the work, and He would provide for its accomplishment.

## CHAPTER II.

### INTRODUCTION OF FIELD-PREACHING—DIFFERENCE WITH THE MORAVIANS, AND SEPARATION FROM THEM—FORMA- TION OF A DISTINCT SOCIETY—THE RULES.

I now proceed to detail the particulars of the call (which Mr. Wesley received through Mr. Whitefield) to Bristol, which was followed by such remarkable consequences. It appears that Mr. Wesley himself complied with this invitation with great reluctance; and not till he had used every means he could, to know what was the will of the Lord concerning him. His brother Charles, we have seen, was extremely averse to his going there, which seems to have been one cause of his hesitation. Another he himself has often mentioned. He thought much, at this time, of death; and as his constitution seemed to him not likely to support itself long under the great and continual labours he was engaged in, he judged it probable that his course was nearly finished. At this time, those fine lines of his friend Mr. Gambold were almost continually in his mind:

Ere long when Sov'reign wisdom wills,  
My soul an unknown path shall tread,  
And strangely leave, who strangely fills  
This frame, and waft me to the dead.  
O what is death? 'Tis life's last shore,  
Where vanities are vain no more:  
Where all pursuits their goal obtain,  
And life is all retouch'd again:  
Where, in their bright result, shall rise  
Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

He did not, therefore, dare to waste a moment, or undertake any employment which he had reason to believe was not

agreeable to the will of God. He was, however, at last prevailed on to go, and for this he had cause to praise the Wise Disposer of all things.

Mr. Whitefield had, a little before, begun to preach in the fields and high-ways near Bristol ; the religious societies, raised up on Dr. Horneck's plan, which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people that crowded to hear him ; he, therefore, pressed Mr. Wesley to come and help him. When he arrived, he also began to expound in one of the society-rooms. But being encouraged by considering the example of our Lord, who preached upon a mountain, and having no place that could contain the multitudes that flocked together, " I submitted," says he, " to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the high-ways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this : [Is it possible any one should be ignorant, that it is fulfilled in every true Minister of Christ ?] *' The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted ; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind ; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'* "

It appears that his adopting this way of preaching the Gospel to the poor, was not of choice. " When," says he, " I was told I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there, flocked together when I was at any of the societies ; where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain. But after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England, which I had often done in a warmer climate ; namely, when the house would not contain the con-

gregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first in Bristol, where the society-rooms were exceeding small; and at Kingswood, where we had no room at all; afterwards in or near London.

“ And I cannot say, I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on Rose-Green, or on the top of Hanham-Mount, some thousands of people were joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

They stood, and under open air ador'd  
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.

And whether they were listening to his word, with attention still as night; or were lifting up their voice in praise, as the sound of many waters: Many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, ‘ *How dreadful is this place! This also is no other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!* ’

“ Be pleased to observe, (1.) That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church, (though not by any judicial sentence,) *for preaching such doctrine*. This was the open avowed cause; there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, except that the people crowded so. (2.) That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till after this prohibition. (3.) That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby; nor had I any other end in view than this, to save as many souls as I could. (4.) *Field-preaching* was, therefore, a sudden *expedient*, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen; and, therefore submitted to, because I thought preaching even *thus* better than *not* preaching *at all*: FIRST, in regard to my own soul, because “ *a dispensation of the Gospel being committed to me,* ’ I did not dare ‘ *not to preach the Gospel.* ’ SECONDLY, in regard to the souls of others, whom I every where saw, ‘ *seeking death in the error of their life.* ’ ”

He still continued to expound in the society-rooms ; but it was in the open air that the Lord chiefly wrought by his ministry. Many thousands now attended the word. In the suburbs of Bristol, at Bath, in Kingswood, on Hanham-Mount and Rose-Green, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, and were utterly without God in the world, now fell before the Majesty of heaven, and joyfully acknowledged that “ *a prophet was sent among them.*” Cries and tears on every hand frequently drowned his voice, while many exclaimed, in the bitterness of their soul, “ *What shall I do to be saved ?*” Not a few of these were soon, (and frequently while he was declaring the willingness of Christ to receive them,) “ *filled with peace and joy in believing,*” and evidenced that the work was really of God, by holy, happy, and unblamable walking before him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise ; and the voice of joy and gladness was found, where wickedness and misery reigned before.

A few here also, in the first instance, and then a greater number, agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen each other, according to the example of the Society in London. Some of these were desirous of building a room large enough to contain not only the Society, but such also as might desire to be present with them when the Scripture was expounded. And on Saturday, the 12th of May, 1739, the first stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

As this was the first preaching-house that was erected, Mr. Wesley has been particular in the relation of some circumstances concerning it. “ I had not at first,” says he, “ the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged, either in the expence of this work, or in the direction of it ; having appointed eleven feoffees, on whom, I supposed, these burdens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake : First, with regard to the expence ; for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had not I immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen ; so that before I knew

where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than a hundred and fifty pounds; and this I was to discharge how I could, the subscriptions of both Societies not amounting to one quarter of the sum. And, as to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in London, Mr. Whitefield in particular, backed with a message by one just come from thence, that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all feoffees, and do every thing in my own name. Many reasons they gave for this; but one was enough, viz. ‘That such feoffees would always have it in their power to controul me, and if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built.’ I accordingly yielded to their advice, and calling all the feoffees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instruments made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it. But I knew ‘*the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof*,’ and in his name set out, nothing doubting.”

His ordinary employment, in public, was now as follows: Every morning he reads prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening he expounded a portion of Scripture, at one or more of the Society-rooms. On Monday, in the afternoon, he preached abroad near Bristol; on Tuesday at Bath and Two Mile-Hill alternately. On Wednesday at Baptist Mills. Every other Thursday near Pensford. Every other Friday in another part of Kingswood. On Saturday in the afternoon and Sunday morning in the Bowling-Green, which lies near the middle of the city. On Sunday at eleven near Hanham-Mount. At two at Clifton, and at five on Rose-Green. “And hitherto,” says he, “*as my day is, so my strength hath been.*”

In the city, in the suburbs, and in Newgate, sinners were daily humbled under the mighty hand of God, and made, by

his grace, new creatures in Christ Jesus. Beside the general blessing which accompanied his labours, the Lord gave special "*times of refreshing from his presence.*" "Seeing," observes Mr. Wesley, "many of the rich at Clifton church, my heart was much pained for them, and I was earnestly desirous that they also might '*enter into the kingdom of heaven.*' But full as I was, I knew not where to begin, in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, till my Testament opened on these words, '*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*' In applying which, my soul was so enlarged, that methought I could have cried out, (in another sense than poor vain Archimedes,) 'Give me where to stand, and I will shake the earth.' God's sending forth lightning with the rain, did not hinder about fifteen hundred from staying at Rose-Green. Our Scripture was, '*It is the glorious God that maketh the thunder. The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.*' In the evening, I spoke to three whose souls were all storm and tempest, and immediately there was a great calm."

Mr. Wesley at first knew not how he ought to judge of these extraordinary things; but when he found, that most of the persons so affected, held fast their confidence, and walked worthy of their Christian calling, "*adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,*" he could not deny that there was a real genuine work of grace upon their minds. He did not, however, consider agitations, visions, or dreams, as any certain evidence of a true conversion to God; but as adventitious or accidental circumstances, which, from various causes, might, or might not, attend it; and this view of them he thought perfectly consistent with Scripture. The gentle manner in which, under these views, he spake of them, was generally misunderstood, raised up several adversaries, and made the good that was really done, be evil spoken of. He gave a particular account, from time to time, of the things that happened, to such ministers as he thought sincerely



desired the increase of God's kingdom, and had some experience of it. Mr. Ralph Erskine, an eminent minister in Scotland, was very favourable in his judgment of these adventitious circumstances; and says, "I desire to bless my Lord, for the great and good news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls '*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*;' and that such '*a great and effectual door is opened*' among you as the '*many adversaries*' cannot shut. As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were affected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, no wonder this was at first surprising to you, since they are, indeed, so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give seem to be exemplified in the outward manner, wherein Paul and the jailor were at first affected; as also Peter's hearers, Acts ii. However, the merciful issue of the conflicts in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing.

"All the outward appearances of people's being affected *among us*, may be reduced to these two sorts; one is, hearing with a close, silent attention, with gravity and greediness, discovered by fixed looks, weeping eyes, and sorrowful or joyful countenances: Another sort is, when they lift up their voice aloud, some more depressedly, and others more highly; and at times the whole multitude in a flood of tears, all as it were crying out at once, till their voice be ready to drown the minister's, that he can scarce be heard for the weeping noise that surrounds him.—The influence on some of these, like a land-flood, dries up; we hear of no change wrought. But on others, it appears in the fruits of righteousness, and the tract of a holy conversation." It appears from this letter, that Mr. Wesley was not the only Gospel minister, whose discourses were, at certain times, attended with uncommon effects on the minds of the hearers.

Mr. Samuel Wesley, however, judged much more unfavour-

ably of the outward circumstances attending his brother's preaching; and even denied the assurance of the pardon of sin, which the people professed to experience. A correspondence took place on these subjects, between him and Mr. John Wesley, a part of which has already been published by Dr. Priestley, in his collection of *Original Letters by the Rev. John Wesley, &c.* But it is necessary to give a more complete view of it.

This correspondence commenced in the latter end of the year 1738, but I have referred the account of it to this place, that I might give the whole of it together. The first letter on this controversy, which has been preserved, was written by Mr. John Wesley, and dated the 30th of October. He observes to his brother Samuel, "That you will always receive kindly, what is so intended, I doubt not. With regard to my own character, and my doctrine likewise, I shall answer you very plainly. By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in Christ, as that '*sin hath no more dominion over him*;' and in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till May the 24th, last past. For till then sin had the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but surely from that time to this, it hath not; such is the free grace of God in Christ. What sins they were, which till then reigned over me, and from which, by the grace of God, I am now free, I am ready to declare on the house-top, if it may be for the glory of God.

"If you ask by what means I am made free, (though not perfect, neither infallibly sure of my *perseverance*,) I answer, by faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith, as I had not till that day. Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation, or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I do now enjoy by his free mercy; though in very deed, it is in me but as a grain of mustard-seed: for the *πληροφορία της πίστεως*,\* [the full assur-

\* We may observe here, that Mr. Wesley distinguishes throughout this letter, (as he did ever after,) faith, and the full assurance of faith,—such an assurance as removes all doubt and fear respecting our justification.

ance of that faith,] *the seal of the Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart*, and producing *joy in the Holy Ghost*; joy which no man taketh away; joy unspeakable and full of glory; *this witness of the Spirit I have not*, but I patiently wait for it, I know many who have already received it; more than one or two, in the very hour we were praying for it. And having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad, as well as in my own country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it, will find these scriptures fulfilled in themselves. My hope is, that they will be fulfilled in me; I build on Christ the Rock of ages: on his sure mercies described in his word; and on his promises, all which I know are yea, and amen. Those who have not yet received joy in the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the *plerophory* of faith (any, or all of which, I take to be the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the sons of God,) I believe to be Christians in that imperfect sense wherein I call myself such; and I exhort them to pray, that God would give them also, ‘*To rejoice in hope of the glory of God,*’ and to feel his ‘*love shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.*’

“ On men I build not, neither on Matilda Chipman’s word, whom I have not talked with five minutes in my life; nor on any thing peculiar in the weak, well-meant relation of William Hervey, who yet is a serious, humble, active Christian. But have you built nothing on these? Yes; I find them more or less, in almost every letter you have written on the subject. Yet were all that has been said on visions, dreams, and balls of fire, to be fairly proposed in syllogisms, I believe it would not prove a jot more on one, than on the other side of the question.

“ O brother, would to God you would leave disputing concerning the things which you know not,—if indeed you know them not,—and beg of God to fill up what is wanting in you. Why should not you also seek till you receive,

*‘that peace of God which passeth understanding?’* Who shall hinder you, notwithstanding the manifold temptations, *‘from rejoicing with joy unspeakable, by reason of glory?’* Amen! Lord Jesus! May you and all who are near of kin to you, if you have it not already, feel his love shed abroad in your hearts, by his Spirit which dwelleth in you, and be *sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance.*”

November 15.—Mr. Samuel Wesley answered, “ I have many remarks to make on your letter, but do not care to fight in the dark, or run my head against a stone wall. You need fear no controversy with me, unless you hold it worth while to remove these three doubts.—(1.) Whether you will own, or disown in terms, the necessity of a sensible information from God of pardon? If you disown it, the matter is over as to *you*: if you own it, then,—(2.) Whether you will not think me distracted, to oppose you with the most infallible of all proofs, inward feeling in yourself, and positive evidence in your friends, while I myself produce neither.—(3.) Whether you will release me from the horns of your dilemma, that I must either talk without knowledge like a fool, or against it like a knave? I conceive neither part strikes—for a man may reasonably argue against what he never felt, and may honestly deny what he has felt, to be necessary to others.

“ You build nothing on tales, but I do. I see what is manifestly built upon them; if you disclaim it, and warn poor shallow pates of their folly and danger, so much the better.\* They are counted signs or tokens, means or conveyances, proofs or evidences, of the sensible information, &c., calculated to turn fools into madmen, and put them, without a jest, into the condition of Oliver’s porter. When I

\* See here the family faith, which was in truth the faith of the best part of the nation, maintained by the elder brother; the faith of the Gospel maintained by the younger. Paul against Gamaliel!

hear visions, &c. reprov'd, discouraged, and ceased among the new brotherhood, I shall then say no more of them ; but till then, I will use my utmost strength which God shall give me, to expose these bad branches of a bad root.

“ Such doctrine as encourages, and abets, spiritual fire-balls, apparitions of the Father, &c. &c., is delusive and dangerous: But the sensible information, &c. is such: *Ergo*.— I mention not this to enter into any dispute with you, for you seem to disapprove, though not expressly disclaim them; but to convince you I am not out of my way, though encountering of wind-mills.”

Mr. Samuel Wesley was not always a fair disputant. On this question he changes the term *witness*, and substitutes for it, *sensible information* ; by which he seems to mean, something visible to the sight, or existing in the fancy, and then indeed visions, &c. were connected with the question ; and he reasons on this supposition. But this was a mere sophism, of which Mr. J. Wesley would probably have taken notice had he been writing to a stranger, or had he foreseen that any one would print the letters after his death. November 30.— He replied to his brother Samuel, and tells him, “ I believe every Christian who has not yet received it, ought to pray for, ‘ *the witness of God’s Spirit with his spirit, that he is a child of God!*’ In being a child of God, the pardon of his sins is included: therefore I believe the Spirit of God will witness this also. That this witness is from God, the very terms imply ; and this witness I believe is necessary for my salvation. How far invincible ignorance may excuse others, I know not.

“ But this you say, is delusive and dangerous, ‘ Because ‘ it encourages and abets, idle visions and dreams.’ It ‘ encourages’—True ; accidentally, but not essentially. And that it does this accidentally, or that weak minds may pervert it to an ill use, is no reasonable objection against it: for so they may pervert every truth in the oracles of God ; more

especially that dangerous doctrine of Joel, cited by St. Peter : ‘ *It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh : and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your youngmen shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*’—Such visions indeed, as you mention, are given up ; does it follow, that visions and dreams in general are bad branches of a bad root ? God forbid. This would prove more than you desire.”

December 13.—Mr. Samuel Wesley again wrote to his brother. He now discussed the matter a little more soberly, and kept more closely to the point in debate. He says, “That you were not a Christian before May, in your sense, any one may allow : But have you ever since continued sinless ?—‘ Sin has not the dominion !’ Do you then never fall ? Or, do you mean no more, than that you are free from presumptuous sins ? If the former, I deny it : If the latter, who disputes ? Your misapplication of the witness of the Spirit is so thoroughly cleared by Bishop Bull, that I shall not hold a candle to the sun. What portion of love, joy, &c., God may please to bestow on Christians, is in his hand, not our’s.\* Those texts you quote no more prove them generally necessary, in what you call your imperfect state, than, ‘ *Rejoice in the Lord always,*’ contradicts—‘ *Blessed are they that mourn.*’—I had much more to say, but it will keep, if ever it should be proper.”

In the beginning of the present year, 1739, Mr. J. Wesley replied to his brother. A part of this letter only is preserved. In what remains, he tells him, “ I think Bishop Bull’s sermon on the witness of the Spirit, (*against the witness of the Spirit* it should rather be entitled,) is full of gross perversions of Scripture ; and manifest contradictions both to Scripture and experience. I find more persons, day by day, who experience a clear evidence of their being in a state of salvation. But I never said, this continues equally clear in all, as long

\* But the record that *He will thus bestow*, is in our hands, that we may BELIEVE.

as they continue in a state of salvation. Some indeed have testified, and the whole tenor of their life made their testimony unexceptionable, that, from that hour they have felt no agonies at all, no anxious fears, no sense of dereliction. Others have.

“ But I much fear, we begin our dispute at the wrong end. I fear you *dissent* from the fundamental Articles of the Church of England. I know Bishop Bull does.—I doubt you do not hold ‘*justification by faith alone*.’ If not, neither do you hold, what our Articles teach concerning the extent and guilt of original sin : Neither do you feel yourself a lost sinner ; and if we begin not here, we are building on the sand.\* O may the God of love, if my sister or you are otherwise minded, reveal even this unto you.”

MR. SAMUEL WESLEY’S REPLY.

“ *Tiverton, March 26, 1739.*

“ DEAR JACK,

“ I might as well have wrote immediately after your last, as now, for any new information that I expected from my mother ; and I might as well let it alone at present, for any effect it will have, farther than shewing you, I neither despise you on the one hand, nor am angry with you on the other. I am persuaded, you will hardly see me face to face in this world, though somewhat nearer than Count Zinzendorf. Charles has at last told me in terms—He believes no more of dreams and visions than I do.† Had *you* said so, I believe I should hardly have spent any time upon them ;

\* This is “ the Analogy of Faith.” None of these doctrines can stand separate from the others. Mr. Samuel Wesley, no doubt, held them all *doctrinally* ; but, it is evident, he did not hold them in the scriptural way : There was no *ελεγχος*, no *evidence* in his faith. Hebrews xi. 1. He had no *sense* of his death through *Adam*, nor of his life through *Christ*.

† He believed as much of them as his brother John did. Neither *placed any dependance* on them ; but Charles was naturally much more timid than his brother.

though I find others credit them, whatever you may do.— You make two degrees or kinds of assurance : that neither of them are necessary to a state of salvation, I prove thus :—

“ I. Because multitudes *are saved* without either. \* These are of three sorts, (1.) All infants baptised, who die before actual sin. (2.) All persons of a melancholy and gloomy constitution ; who, without a miracle, cannot be changed. (3.) All penitents, who live a good life after their recovery, and yet never attain to their first state.

“ II. The lowest assurance is an impression from God, who is infallible, that heaven shall be actually enjoyed by the person to whom it is made.† How is this consistent with fears of miscarriage ; with deep sorrow, and going on the way weeping ? How can any doubt, after such certificate ? If they can, then here is an assurance whereby the person who has it is not *sure*.‡

“ III. If this be essential to a state of salvation, it is utterly impossible any should fall from that state *finally* ; since, how can any thing be more fixed, than what Truth and Power has said He will perform ? Unless you will say of the matter here, as I observed of the person, that there may be assurance wherein the thing itself is not certain. We join in love.

“ I am your affectionate friend and brother,

“ S. WESLEY ”

April 4.—Mr. John Wesley replied from Bristol. “ I rejoice greatly,” says he, “ at the temper with which you now write, and trust there is not only mildness, but love in your heart. If so, you shall know of this doctrine, whether it be of God ; though perhaps not by my ministry.

“ To this hour you have pursued an *ignoratio elenchi*, [a mistake of the question]. Your assurance and mine are as

\* How did he *know* that ? † No. The point is, am I *now* a child of God ?

‡ This is a common sophism. Mr. Hampson and Mr. Southey both use it.



different as light from darkness. I mean, an assurance that I am *now* in a state of salvation ; you, an assurance that I shall *persevere* therein. The very definition of the term cuts off your second and third observation. As to the first I would take notice ; (1.) No kind of assurance, that I know, either of faith or repentance, is essential to their salvation who die infants. (2.) I believe, God is ready to give all true penitents, who fly to his grace in Christ, a fuller sense of pardon than they had before they fell. I know this to be true of several : Whether these are exempt cases, I know not. (3.) Persons that were of a melancholy and gloomy constitution, even to some degree of madness, I have known in a moment, (let it be called a miracle, I quarrel not,) brought into a state of firm lasting peace and joy.

“ My dear brother, the whole question turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny that God does now work these effects ; at least, that he works them in such a manner. I affirm both, because I have heard those facts with my ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen, as far as it can be seen, very many persons changed in a moment, from the spirit of horror, fear, and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, peace ; and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, eye or ear witness. I know several persons in whom this great change from the power of Satan unto God, was wrought either in sleep, or during a strong representation to the eye of their minds, of Christ either on the cross, or in glory. This is the fact. Let any judge of it as they please. But that such a change was then wrought, appears, not from their shedding tears only, or sighing, or singing psalms, but from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked ; from that time holy, just, and good.

“ I will shew you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb ; he that was a drunkard, but now exemplarily sober ;

the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very lusts of the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, that God now, as aforetime, gives ‘*remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.*’”

April 16.—Mr. Samuel Wesley rejoined: “I find brevity has made me obscure. I argue against assurance in your, or any sense, as part of the gospel-covenant; because many are saved *without it*,\* you own you cannot deny exempt cases, which is giving up the dispute.† *Your assurance*, being a clear impression of God upon the soul, I say *must be perpetual*—must be *irreversible*.‡ Else it is not assurance from God, infallible and omnipotent. You say the cross is strongly represented to the eye of the mind. Do these words signify in plain English, *the fancy*? *Inward eyes, ears and feelings*, are nothing to *other people*.|| I am heartily sorry such alloy should be found among such piety.”

We now see this controversy reduced to two points; *assurance* itself, and the manner of receiving it. Mr. John Wesley still maintained his former positions, and, May 10th, told his brother, “The Gospel promises to you and me, and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many of those whom the Lord our God shall call, and who are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ‘*The witness of God’s Spirit with their spirit, that they are the children of God:*’ that they are *now*, at this hour, all accepted in the Beloved: But it witnesses *not*, that *they always shall be*. It is an assurance of *present* salvation only; therefore, not necessarily perpetual, neither irreversible.

“I am one of many witnesses of this matter of fact, that God does now make good this his promise daily, very frequently during a representation, (how made I know not, but not to

\* Where is the proof? † No; it only allowed that there were difficulties in some cases.

‡ Perhaps so, in Calvin’s Theory; but God is a *Judge* as well as a *Sovereign*.

|| No, not to people that are not *born again*: but that is their fault.

the outward eye,) of Christ, either hanging on the cross, or standing on the right hand of God. This I know to be of God, *because* from that hour the person so affected is a new creature, both as to his inward tempers and outward life. ‘*Old things are passed away ; and all things become new.*’”

Mr. Wesley did not remember, that after this time he received any letter from his brother. But there is one in Dr. Priestley’s collection, signed Samuel Wesley, and addressed to his brother John ; in which he tells him, “ You yourself doubted at first, and inquired and examined about the ecstasies ; the matter therefore, is not so plain as motion to a man walking. But I have my own reason, as well as your own authority, against the exceeding clearness of divine interposition there. Your followers fall into agonies. I confess it. They are freed from them, after you have prayed over them. Granted. They say, it is God’s doing. I own they say so.—Dear brother, where is your ocular demonstration ? Where, indeed, the rational proof ? Their living well afterwards may be a probable and sufficient argument, that they believe themselves ; but it goes no further.” What other proof could be given ? Or what other proof ought to be required, when the doctrine is scriptural ?

Upon a review of the whole of this controversy, we may safely pronounce, that the doctrine of assurance is in no respect invalidated, or rendered doubtful by any thing Mr. Samuel Wesley has said against it. But it is observable in the course of this dispute, that his mind was much softened towards his brother ; and the opposition he at first made against the doctrine, and manner of proceeding, became less violent. In the last letter he wrote, he says not a word against assurance, though he does against the *manner* in which it was said persons had received it.\* We may hope, therefore, that he was convinced, and no longer

\* Mr. Wesley believed those persons, if the *fruits of righteousness* were manifest. The law of love, that *thinketh no evil*, required that he should believe them.

opposed the doctrine itself, when properly explained and guarded. At the bottom of the last letter but one, he addressed his brother in these words, “Το λοιπον, ἀδελφω, προσευχεσθον περὶ ἡμῶν. κ. τ. λ. *Finally, brethren, pray ye both † for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.*” See 2 Thess. iii. 1. A strange address this, if he believed his two brothers were preaching false and dangerous doctrines! He seems to have thought more favourably of their doctrines and methods of proceeding, when he wrote these words, than he did when they first set out. After persevering fifty years, through all kinds of difficulty and obloquy, the two brothers extorted from the public the same favourable opinion.

Some years after this period, Mr. Wesley expressed his opinion more fully concerning those agitations, &c. which attended the conviction of sin under his sermons this summer at Bristol. He supposes, it is easy to account for them either on principles of reason, or scripture. “First,” says he, “on principles of reason. For how easy is it to suppose, that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death, should affect the body as well as the soul, during the present laws of vital union; should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulations, and put nature out of its course! Yea, we may question, whether while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following?”

“It is likewise easy to account for these things on principles of Scripture. For when we take a view of them in this light, we are to add, to the consideration of natural causes, the agency of those spirits who still *‘exceed in strength,’* and, as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy; to *tear those that are coming to*

† He uses the dual number.

*Christ.* It is also remarkable, that there is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared. So that we cannot allow even the conviction attended with these to be *madness*, without giving up both reason and Scripture.\*

After eight or nine days' absence, in which he came to London, Mr. Wesley returned to Bristol, and continued his labours with increasing success. He was now attacked by friends as well as enemies, for his irregularity. To a friend† who had expostulated with him on this subject, he wrote his thoughts in a letter, of which the following is an extract : “ As to your advice that I should settle in College, I have no business there, having now no office, and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient, viz. to accept of a cure of souls, it will be time enough to consider when one is offered to me. But in the mean time, you think, I ought to be still ; because otherwise I should invade another's office.—You accordingly ask, How it is that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded : and think it hard to justify doing this, in other men's parishes, upon Catholic principles :

“ Permit me to speak plainly. If by ‘ Catholic principles,’ you mean any other than scriptural, they weigh nothing with me : I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures. But on scriptural principles, I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this, in another's parish ; that is, in effect, not to do it at all ; seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom then shall I hear ? God or man ? ‘ *If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I*

\* Wesley's Works, in xxxii. Vols. Vol. xiv. p. 323.

† The late Rev. James Hervey, who had been his pupil, and was the author of *Theron and Aspasio, Meditations, &c. &c.*

*preach not the Gospel.* But where shall I preach it, upon the principles you mention?—Not in any of the Christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes.—Suffer me to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon *all the world* as *my parish*; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad-tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed according to the plain direction of his word, ‘*as I have opportunity, doing good to all men.*’ And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, ‘*and go about doing good.*’

“If you ask, ‘How can this be? How can one do good, of whom *men say all manner of evil*?’ I will put you in mind, (though you once knew this, yea, and much established me in that great truth,) the more evil men say of me for my Lord’s sake, the more good he will do by me. That it is for his sake I know and he knoweth, and the event agreeth thereto; for he mightily confirms the words I speak, by the Holy Ghost, given unto those that hear them. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you. I fear, you have herein made shipwreck of the faith. I fear, ‘*Satan, transformed into an angel of light,*’ hath assaulted you, and prevailed also. I fear, that offspring of hell, worldly or Mystic prudence, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the Gospel. How else could you ever conceive, that the being reviled and ‘*hated of all men,*’ should make us less fit for our Master’s service? How else could you ever think, of ‘*saving yourself and them that hear you,*’ without being ‘*the filth and offscouring of the world*?’ To this hour, is this Scripture true. And I therein

rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Blessed be God, I enjoy the reproach of Christ ! O, may you also be vile, exceeding vile for his sake ! God forbid, that you should ever be other than generally scandalous : I had almost said, universally. If any man tell you there is a new way of following Christ, ‘*he is a liar and the truth is not in him.*’” No man, however, lamented that awful way of breaking the ninth commandment more than Mr. Wesley.

Those who have read the accounts of the great revivals of true religion in many parts of Europe, and in our own country in particular, will easily perceive the sameness of those devices of satan, whereby he perverts the right ways of the Lord. Latimer, as well as Luther, complains of those, who, knowing that we are justified by faith alone, disallow the fruits of faith. It could not be but that the sower of tares would endeavour by every means to overturn this blessed work. Mr. Wesley was now called to oppose three grand deceptions of the enemy of souls : (1st.) Antinomianism, the making void the law through faith : (2dly.) Unscriptural stillness, the neglect of the ordinances of the Gospel, particularly, prayer, hearing and reading the Scriptures, and the Lord’s-supper : (3dly.) Attention to dreams, visions, and men’s own imaginations and feelings, without bringing them to the only sure test, the oracles of God.

Something of this kind began now to appear in several places, and especially in London. But those who fell first into these errors, were in general sincere persons, that desired to know the truth, and do the will of God. It was not therefore difficult for him at this time to bring them back to the “*faith once delivered to the saints.*” He warned them, that Christ no more designed to “*make us free*” from his own law, than from holiness or heaven ; that the Christian ordinances were real means of grace ; and that God does by them convey preventing, justifying, and sanctifying grace to those who humbly

use them : That in respect to dreams, visions or revelations, supposed to be made to their souls ; or to tears, or any other involuntary effects wrought on their bodies ; these were in themselves of a doubtful, disputable nature : They might be from God, or they might not ; and were therefore not simply to be relied on, (any more than simply to be condemned,) but to be brought to the only certain test, the law and the testimony

He now laboured in many places between London and Bristol. In Moorfields, on Kennington-Common, Blackheath, &c., many thousands attended his ministry. In every place God bore witness to his truth : Multitudes were convinced, that “*the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.*” and they brought forth fruit meet for repentance ; and not a few found “*redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of their sins.*”

Various and strange were the reports concerning him. As Jeremiah, he could say, “*I heard the defaming of many. Report, said they, and we will report it again.*” The most common rumour was, that he was a Jesuit, and had evil designs against the Church, if not against the State. Various were the publications concerning him. Most of these lived but a few days or weeks, the writers being totally ignorant of the subject they wrote upon. Some of them however were not unworthy of notice, which he answered with great ability, as will appear in the review of his writings.

His mother now began to attend his ministry, being convinced that he spoke the words of truth and soberness. She had for some time lived with her son-in-law Mr. Hall, and by misrepresentations had been led to think that her sons John and Charles were in a dangerous error. Her son Samuel, who was deeply prejudiced against his brother's preaching and conduct, laments with great surprise, in a letter to his mother, written about this time, that “she should countenance the spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation.” But Mr. Wesley solves this difficulty. “Monday,



September 3," says he, "I talked largely with my mother, who told me, that, till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned, as the having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: Much less did she imagine, that this was the common privilege of all true believers. 'Therefore,' said she, 'I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, *'The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee ;* the words struck through my heart, and I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all my sins.'

"I asked, Whether her Father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith? And, whether she had not heard him preach it to others? She answered, 'He had it himself, and declared, a little before his death, that, for more than forty years, he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all, of his being *'accepted in the Beloved.'* But that nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no, not once, explicitly upon it; whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God." After this she lived with Mr. John Wesley, and joyfully attended his ministry till God called her to a better world. I shall have occasion to speak more of this excellent woman.

A serious clergyman, convinced of his uprightness, but yet staggered at a conduct which he thought contrary to the interests of the Established Church, desired to know, in what points he differed from the Church of England? "I answered," says Mr. Wesley, "to the best of my knowledge, in none: The doctrines we preach, are the doctrines of the Church of England: Indeed the fundamental doctrines of the Church, clearly laid down, in her prayers, articles, and homilies.

"He asked, In what points then do you differ from the other clergy of the Church of England? I answered, In none from that part of the clergy who adhere to the doctrines of the Church; but from that part of the clergy who dissent from

the Church, (though they own it not,) I differ in the points following :

“ FIRST, They speak of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.

“ SECONDLY, They speak of our own holiness or good works, as the cause of our justification ; or, that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God. I believe, neither our own holiness nor good works are any part of the cause of our justification ; but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it ; or, that *for the sake of which, on account of which*, we are justified before God.

“ THIRDLY, They speak of good works, as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe, no good work can be previous to justification, nor consequently a condition of it : But that we are justified, (being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work.) by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work.

“ FOURTHLY, They speak of sanctification (or holiness) as if it were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in these two points, (1.) The doing no harm, (2.) The doing good, (as it is called,) i. e. The using the means of grace, and helping our neighbour.

“ I believe it to be, an inward thing, namely, *The life of God in the soul of man ; a participation of the Divine Nature ; the mind that was in Christ ; or, The renewal of our heart, after the image of Him that created us.*

“ LASTLY, They speak of the *New Birth*, as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism ; or, at most, a change from *outward wickedness* to *outward goodness* ; from a vicious to (what is called) a virtuous life. I believe it to be or to heal ; either to convince of sin, or to give remission of

an inward thing ; a change from inward wickedness to inward goodness : An entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the devil, (wherein we are born,) to the image of God : A change from the love of the creature to the love of the Creator, from earthly and sensual, to heavenly and holy affections ; in a word, a change from the tempers of the spirits of darkness, to those of the angels of God in heaven.

“ There is therefore a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us : So that if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind.”

About this time Mr. Wesley made the following remarks on the great work, which God had already wrought by his ministry : “ Such a work this hath been in many respects, as neither we nor our fathers had known. Not a few whose sins were of the most flagrant kind, drunkards, swearers, thieves, whoremongers, adulterers, have been brought *from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God*. Many of these were rooted in their wickedness, having long gloried in their shame, perhaps for a course of many years, yea, even to hoary hairs. Many had not so much as a notional faith, being Jews, Arians, Deists or Atheists. Nor has God only made bare his arm in these last days, in behalf of open publicans and sinners ; but many of the Pharisees also have believed on him ; of the righteous that seemed to need no repentance : And having received the sentence of death in themselves, have then heard the voice that raiseth the dead ; have been made partakers of an inward, vital religion, even *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*.

“ The manner wherein God hath wrought this work, is as strange as the work itself. In any particular soul, it has generally, if not always, been wrought in one moment. As the lightning shining from heaven, so was the coming of the Son of Man, either to bring peace or a sword ; either to wound

sins in his blood. And the other circumstances attending it have been equally remote from what human wisdom would have expected. So true is that word, ‘*My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.*’ These extraordinary circumstances seem to have been designed by God, for the further manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world.”

About the middle of August, Mr. Wesley had a conversation with the Bishop of Bristol, on “*Justification by faith alone* ;” a part of which has been preserved. The original is now before me, in his own hand.

BISHOP. Why, Sir, our faith itself is a good work, it is a virtuous temper of mind.

MR. WESLEY. My Lord, whatever faith is, our church asserts, we are justified by faith alone. But how it can be called a good work, I see not : It is the gift of God ; and a gift that pre-supposes nothing in us, but sin and misery.

B. How, Sir ! Then you make God a tyrannical Being, if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not those justified too ?

W Because, my Lord, they ‘*resist his Spirit* ;’ because ‘*they will not come to him that they may have life* ;’ because they suffer him not to ‘*work in them both to will and to do*’ They cannot be *saved*, because they will not *believe*.

B. Sir, what do you mean by faith ?

W My Lord ; by justifying faith I mean, a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved *him*, and given himself for *him*, and that, through Christ, *his* sins are forgiven. \*

\* This is the definition in the *Homily*, but Mr. Wesley thought more scripturally afterwards. It should be,—“and that his sins are atoned for by Christ :” which atonement cannot be *truly* pleaded in vain. It would appear from the *Homily*, that the faith *whereby* we are justified, is justification itself.

B. I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our church?

W My Lord, from her Homily on Salvation, where she describes it thus; “*A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.*”

B. Why, Sir, this is quite another thing.

W My Lord, I conceive it to be the very same.

B. Mr. Wesley, I will deal plainly with you. I once thought you, and Mr. Whitefield, well-meaning men; but I cannot think so now. For I have heard more of you: matters of fact, Sir. And Mr. Whitefield says in his Journal, “There are promises still to be fulfilled in me.” Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!

W My Lord, for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no *extraordinary* revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost: None but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for. But I do not wonder your Lordship has heard facts asserted, which, if true, would prove the contrary: Nor do I wonder, that your Lordship, believing them true, should alter the opinion you once had of me. A quarter of an hour I spent with your Lordship before, and about an hour now: And perhaps you have never conversed one other hour with any one who spake in my favour. But how many with those who spake on the other side! So that your Lordship could not but think as you do.—But pray, my Lord, what are those facts you have heard?

B. I hear you administer the sacrament in your societies.

W My Lord, I never did yet, and I believe never shall.

B. I hear too, that many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them.

W I do so, my Lord, when any shew by strong cries

and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish; I frequently pray to God, to deliver them from it, and our prayer is often heard in that hour.

B. Very extraordinary indeed! Well, Sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it you very freely. You have no business here. You are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore, I advise you to go hence.

W. My Lord, my business on earth is, to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay. As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world. Your Lordship knows, being ordained a Priest, by the commission I then received, I am a Priest of the church universal: And being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God, in any part of the Church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that, in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, ‘Shall I obey God or man?’ But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile, that I could advance the glory of God, and the salvation of souls in any other place, more than in Bristol; in that hour, by God’s help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do.”

Religion now made a rapid progress; societies were formed in many places, and even at a considerable distance. The labourers as yet were few, but, believing they were engaged in the cause of God against ignorance and profaneness, which overspread the land, they were indefatigable, scarcely giving themselves any rest day or night. The effects of their preaching made much noise, which at length roused some of the sleeping watchmen of Israel; not indeed to in-

quire after the truth, and amend their ways, but to crush these irregular proceedings, that they might quietly sleep again. These opponents, however, had more zeal against Methodism, than knowledge of it. They attacked it with nothing but idle stories, misrepresentations of facts, and gross falsehoods. They retailed these from the pulpits, and published them from the press, with little regard to *moderation*, *charity*, or even *decency*. A pious and moderate clergyman, perceiving that such attacks could do no good to their cause, published a few rules to direct the assailants in their future attempts to stop the increasing innovations, in a discourse concerning enthusiasm, or religious delusion. “A minister of our church,” says he, “who may look upon it as his duty to warn his parishioners, or an author who may think it necessary to caution his readers, against *such preachers*, or their doctrine, (that is, enthusiastic preachers, such as he took the Methodist preachers to be,) ought to be very careful to act with a Christian spirit, and to advance nothing but with *temper*, *charity*, and *truth*.—Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them.

“1. Not to *blame* persons, for doing that now which Scripture records holy men of old to have practised; lest had they lived in those times, they should have condemned them also.

“2. Not to censure men in holy orders, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in the *Scriptures*, and by *our church*; lest they should ignorantly *censure* what they profess to *defend*.

“3. Not to censure any professed members of our church, who live good lives, for resorting to religious assemblies in private houses, to perform in society acts of divine worship; when the same seems to have been practised by the primitive Christians; and when, alas! there are so many parishes, where a person, *piously* disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than one hour

and a half in a week.”—We may add, and no church which will contain one fourth, perhaps not one tenth of the inhabitants.

“ 4 Not to condemn those who are constant attendants on the communion and service of our church, if they sometimes use *other prayers* in private assemblies: Since the best divines of our church have composed and published many prayers, that have not the sanction of public authority; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

“ 5. Not to establish the power of *working miracles*, as the great criterion of a Divine mission; when Scripture teaches us, that the agreement of doctrines with truth, as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible rule.

“ 6. Not to drive any away from our church, by opprobriously calling them Dissenters, or treating them as such, so long as they keep to her communion.

“ 7. Not lightly to take up with silly stories that may be propagated, to the discredit of persons of a general good character.

“ I do not lay down,” says he, “ these *negative rules* so much for the sake of any persons whom the unobservance of them would immediately injure, as for our church and her professed defenders. For churchmen, however *well-meaning*, would lay themselves open to censure, and might do her *irretrievable damage*, by a behaviour contrary to them.”

Mr. Wesley often wished that they, who either preached or wrote against him, would seriously attend to these rules; but these rules were too candid and liberal for the common herd of opposers. Some attacked him with arguments, wretchedly misapplied; others with ridicule, as the more easy method. Among the latter were some even of his own family. His eldest sister Emily had always been accustomed to correspond with him, and being some years older than he, and of a strong understanding, had taken great liberty in expressing approbation or disapprobation of any part of his conduct



She wrote to him about this time in a very ill temper, abused the Methodists as bad people, and told him she understood he could work miracles, cast out devils, &c., that she had the devil of poverty in her pocket, and should be much obliged if he would cast him out.—Mr. Wesley knew in whom he had believed, and in the midst of abuse poured out upon him by friends and enemies, went on his way as if he heard not.

After a short visit to London, he again returned to Bristol. October 15. Upon a pressing invitation he set out for Wales. The churches were here also shut against him, as in England, and he preached in private houses, or in the open air, to a willing people.—“I have seen,” says he, “no part of England so pleasant for sixty or seventy miles together, as those parts of Wales I have been in: and most of the inhabitants are indeed ‘ripe for the Gospel.’ I mean, if the expression seems strange, they are *earnestly desirous* of being instructed in it; and as *utterly ignorant* of it they are, as any Creek or Cherokee Indians. I do not mean, they are ignorant of the name of Christ: many of them can say both the Lord’s Prayer and the Belief. Nay, and some, all the Catechism: But take them out of the road of what they have learned by rote, and they know no more, (nine or ten of those with whom I conversed,) either of Gospel salvation, or of that faith whereby alone we can be saved, than Chicali, or Tomo Chachi. Now what spirit is he of, who had rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge, than that they should be saved, even by the exhortations of Howell Harris, or an Itinerant preacher!” The word did not fall to the ground. Many, however, ‘*repented and believed the Gospel.*’ And some united together, to strengthen each others’ hands in God, and to provoke one another to love and to good works.

During this time, Mr. C. Wesley, having also got rid of his scruples of preaching out of a church, united with his brother in *seeking* as well as *saving* the lost. The fence being thus

removed, the usual consequences appeared. He observes, Mr. Shaw began to disturb their little society, by insisting, that there is no Priesthood in the Christian church; and that he himself had as good a right to baptize and administer the Sacrament as any other man. It appears, by his claiming a right in this way to baptize, &c. that he was a lay-man; and it must be acknowledged, that Christian Ministers, considered as an order in the church, are no where, in the New Testament, *called* Priests; yet they were certainly set apart, by due authority, to that ministry, nor were any others ever allowed to act thus. “I tried in vain,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “to check Mr. Shaw in his wild rambling talk against a Christian Priesthood. At last I told him, I would oppose him to the utmost, and either he or I must quit the society. In expounding, I warned them strongly against schism,\* into which Mr. Shaw’s notions must necessarily lead them. The society were all for my brother’s immediate return.—April 19th, I found Mr. Stonehouse exactly right, (that is, in his notions on the Priesthood,) and warned Mrs. Vaughan and Brookmans against Shaw’s pestilent errors. I spoke strongly at the Savoy Society, in behalf of the Church of England.”

April 24th, Mr. Whitefield preached at Fetter-lane; being returned from Bristol, where he had first preached in the open air, and thus opened the way more fully to an Itinerant ministry; but of which none of them before seem to have entertained the least conception. It seems that Howell Harris came to London with him; “a man,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “after my own heart.”—Mr. Whitefield related the dismal effects of Shaw’s doctrine at Oxford. Both he and Howell Harris insisted on Shaw’s expulsion from the society. April 26th, Mr. Whitefield preached in Islington church-yard:

\* The true scriptural meaning of the word schism is here intimated; not a separation *from* a church or society, but a division *in* such a society; and such a division as destroys or hinders brotherly love.

The numerous audience could not have been more affected within the walls. Saturday, the 28th, he preached out again. After him Mr. Bowers got up to speak. I conjured him not," says Mr. Charles Wesley, "but he beat me down, and followed his impulse. I carried many away with me." This last circumstance is the more worthy of notice, as it is, so far as I can find, the first instance of a lay-man attempting to preach. It must be observed, however, that it was not with approbation, but by violence. Mr. C. Wesley observes, that he and Mr. Whitefield declared against it. The necessity of it was not yet apparent. There seems to have been no call for it.

May 25th, Mr. Clagget having invited Mr. C. Wesley to Broad-oaks, he went thither, and preached to four or five hundred attentive hearers. May 29th, "A farmer," says he, "invited me to preach in his field. I did so to about five hundred, on '*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*' On the 31st, a Quaker sent me a pressing invitation to preach at Thackstead. I scrupled preaching in another's parish, till I had been refused the church. Many Quakers, and near seven hundred others, attended, while I declared in the high-ways, *the Scripture hath concluded all under sin.*"

June 6th, two or three, who had embraced the opinions of Shaw, declared themselves no longer members of the Church of England. "Now," says Mr. C. Wesley, "am I clear of them. By renouncing the church, they have discharged me." About this time the French Prophets raised some disturbance in the society, and gained several proselytes, who warmly defended them. June 12th, two of them were present at a meeting, and occasioned much disputing. At length Mr. C. Wesley asked, "Who is on God's side? Who for the old Prophets rather than the new? Let them follow me. They followed me into the preaching-room. I expounded the lesson; several gave an account of their conversion; dear brother

Bowers confessed his errors, and we rejoiced and triumphed in the name of the Lord our God."

June 19th, Mr. C. Wesley was at Lambeth with the Archbishop, who treated him with much severity. His Grace declared he would not dispute; nor would he, AS YET, proceed to excommunication. It does not appear that the Archbishop condemned the doctrines Mr. Wesley preached, but the manner of preaching them: It was irregular, and this was judged a cause sufficient for condemning him. Regularity is undoubtedly necessary in the government both of Church and State. But when a system of rules and orders, *purely human*, is so established for the government of the church, as to be made *perpetual*, whatever the state of the people may be, it must, in many cases, become injurious rather than useful. A minister of Christ may be so circumstanced, that regularity would obstruct rather than promote his usefulness. Irregularity then becomes his duty, the end to be attained being infinitely more important than any prudential rules. If this be not allowed, we hearken to man rather than to God.

Mr. C. Wesley bore the Archbishop's reproof with great firmness, while in his presence; but, after leaving him, he fell into great heaviness, and for several days suffered a severe inward conflict. He at length perceived that it arose from the fear of man. Mr. Whitefield urged him to preach in the fields the next Sunday, knowing that, by this step, he would be forced to fight his way forward in the true work of the ministry. This advice he followed. June 24th, "I prayed," says he, "and went forth in the *name of Jesus Christ*. I found near a thousand helpless sinners waiting for the word in Moorfields. I invited them in my Master's words as well as name; '*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' The Lord was with me, even me, the meanest of his messengers, according to his promise. At St. Paul's, the psalms, lessons, &c. for the day.

put new life into me, and so did the sacrament. My load was gone, and with it all my doubts and scruples. God shone on my path, and I knew this was his will concerning me. I then walked to Kennington Common, and cried to multitudes upon multitudes, ‘*Repent ye and believe the Gospel.*’ The Lord was my strength, and my mouth, and my wisdom. O that all would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness!” He thus hearkened to “*the Bishop of our souls,*” and had his reward.

June 29th, Mr. C. Wesley was at Wickham, in his way to Oxford. “Here,” says he “I heard of much disturbance, occasioned by Bowers’ preaching in the streets.”\* The next day he reached Oxford, and waited on the Dean, who spoke with unusual severity against field-preaching, and of Mr. Whitefield who first introduced it. July 1st, he preached a sermon on Justification, before the University, with great boldness. All were very attentive.—July 2d, Mr. Gambold came to him, who had been with the Vice-Chancellor, and well received. “I waited,” says Mr. Wesley, “on the Vice-Chancellor, at his own desire. I gave him a full account of the Methodists, which he approved, but objected to the irregularity of doing good in other men’s parishes. He charged Mr. Whitefield with breach of promise, appealed to the Dean and appointed a second meeting there. All were against my sermon, as liable to be misunderstood.†—July 3d, Mr. Bowers had been laid hold of, for preaching in Oxford. To-day the Beadle brought him to me. I talked to him closely; he had nothing to reply, but promised to do so no more, and thereby obtained his liberty. At night I had another conference with

\* It is strange that Mr. C. Wesley, or any of his clerical brethren, should think, that the fire which burned in *their* souls would not also burn in those who had *like precious faith*!

† Very likely it might, for it is totally contrary to the wisdom of this world. It is published in the first volume of Mr. Wesley’s Sermons.

the Dean, who cited Mr. Whitefield to judgment.\* I said, ‘Mr. Dean, he shall be ready to answer the citation.’ He used the utmost address to bring me off from preaching abroad, from expounding in houses, and from singing psalms. He denied justification by faith and all vital religion.”—It is plain, such men could not be obeyed by any servant of Christ, but at the peril of his soul.

July 4th, Mr. C. Wesley returned to London. On the 8th, he preached to near ten thousand hearers, by computation, in Moorfields, and the same day at Kennington Common. His labours now daily increased upon him; and his success, in bringing great numbers from darkness to light, and in rousing the minds of vast multitudes to a serious enquiry after religion, was beyond any thing we can, at present, easily conceive. Yet he was far from being elated, as a hypocrite would certainly have been, but felt the full force of the temptations which arose from the success of his ministry.—July 22d, he says, “Never, till now, did I know the strength of temptation and energy of sin. Who, that consults only the quiet of his own mind, would covet great success? I live in a continual storm; my soul is always in my hand; the enemy thrusts sore at me that I may fall, and a worse enemy than the devil is my own heart. *Miror quemquam prædicatorem salvari.*† The only remedy for these painful and oftentimes weakening feelings, is an increase of faith. The Lord permits the attack, to shew us the weakness of our faith. August 7th, he continues, “I preached repentance and faith at Plaistow, and at night expounded, in a private house, on Lazarus dead and raised. The next day, called on Thomas Keen, a mild and candid Quaker. Preached at Marybone;—too well pleased with my success, which brought upon me strong temptations. August 10th, I gave Mr. Whitefield some account both of my labours and conflicts.”

\* I suppose for some breach of order.

† I wonder any preacher of the Gospel is saved.

“ DEAR GEORGE,

“ I forgot to mention the most material occurrence at Plaistow ; namely, that a Clergyman was there convinced of sin. He stood under me, and appeared, throughout my discourse, under the greatest perturbation of mind. In our return, we were much delighted with an old spiritual Quaker, who is clear in justification. Friend Keen seems to have experience, and is right in the foundation.—I cannot preach out on the week-days, for the expence of coach-hire ; nor can I accept of dear Mr. Steward’s offer, to which I should be less backward, would he follow my advice ; but while he is so lavish of his Lord’s goods, I cannot consent that his ruin should in any degree *seem* to be under my hand. I am continually tempted to leave off preaching, and hide myself like J. Hutchins. I should then be free from temptation, and have leisure to attend to my own improvement.\* God continues to work by me, but not in me, that I perceive. Do not reckon upon me, my brother, in the work God is doing ; for I cannot expect that he should long employ one, who is ever longing and murmuring to be discharged.”

“ To-day,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “ I took J. Bray to Mr. Law, who resolved all his experience into fits, or natural affection ; and desired him to take no notice of his comforts, which he had better be without, than have. He blamed Mr. Whitefield’s Journal, and way of proceeding ; said, he had had great hopes that the Methodists would have been dispersed by little and little, into livings, and have leavened the whole lump. I told him my experience ; then, said he, I am far below you, (if you are right,) not worthy to wipe your shoes. He agreed to our notion of faith, but would have it, that all men held it. He was fully against the lay-men’s expounding,

\* He might have *leisure*, but would *improvement* follow ? Not unless the Lord gave him that leisure. There was some Pharisaism, some self-dependence, in this sentiment.

as the very worst thing both for themselves and others. I told him, he was my school-master to bring me to Christ; but the reason why I did not come sooner to Christ, was, I sought to be sanctified before I was justified. I disclaimed all expectation of becoming some GREAT ONE. Among other things he said, ‘Were I so talked of, as Mr. Whitefield is, I should run away, and hide myself entirely.’—I answered, You might, but God would bring you back, like Jonah.—He told me, joy in the Holy Ghost was the most dangerous thing God could give.—I replied, But cannot God guard his own gifts? He often disclaimed advising us, seeing we had the Spirit of God; but mended on our hands, and at last came almost quite over to us.”—This good man lived in the element of the Seventh of the Romans; but could not stand against those who lived in the Eighth, while its truths were maintained *in love*.

August 12th, He observes, “I received great power to explain the good *Samaritan*: Communicated at St. Paul’s, as I do every Sunday: Convinced multitudes at Kennington-Common, from ‘*Such were some of you, but ye are washed,*’ &c. And before the day was past, felt my own sinfulness so great, that I wished I had never been born.”—Thus God hides pride from man; thus He prevents great gifts from destroying the possessor of them; and thus he shews them the necessity of *going on to perfection*.

August 13, Mr. C. Wesley wrote to Mr. Seward as follows: “I preached yesterday to more than ten thousand hearers. I am so buffeted both before and after, that were I not forcibly detained, I should fly from every human face. If God does make a way for me to escape, I shall not easily be brought back again. I cannot love advertising; it looks like sounding a trumpet. I hope our brother Hutchins will come forth at last, and throw away my mantle of reserve, which he seems to have taken up.”—It seems by this, that he did not wish that *others* should give up the work.



Mr. Whitefield was now on the point of returning to America, and on the 15th of August Mr. C. Wesley wrote to him. "Let not Cossart's opinion of your Letter to the Bishop, weaken your hands. *Abundans cautio nocet* :\* It is the Moravian infirmity. To-morrow I set out for Bristol. I pray you may all have a good voyage, and that many poor souls may be added to the church by your ministry, before we meet again. Meet again, I am confident we shall, perhaps both here and in America. The will of the Lord be done, with us and by us, in time and in eternity !"

That mystery of iniquity which had appeared before, now ripened apace. The Society which had been formed in London, soon after Mr. J. Wesley's return from Georgia, was much increased in number, and in general consisted of those who walked worthy of their calling, But doubtful disputations had for some time interrupted their harmony, and they seemed no longer to keep "*the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*"

In order to give a full view of the nature of those disputes, we subjoin a statement of them drawn up by Mr. Wesley, immediately after conversing with one of those who were principally concerned.

"Monday, December 31.—I had a long, and particular conversation with the Moravian minister, Mr. Molther. I weighed all his words with the utmost care, desired him to explain what I did not understand ; asked him again and again, Do I not mistake what you say ? Is this your mean-

\* "*Too much caution is hurtful.*" Some persons perhaps may think, that neither Mr. Whitefield, nor any of them stood in need of this admonition ; of this, however, we are not very proper judges at this distance of time. It is evident, that on many occasions they did use much caution. Mr. C. Wesley speaks as though he had some thoughts of going again to America, and he mentions such intentions in several places ; but they never came to any thing fixed and determined. He could hardly bear the appearance of warring against that Church which he loved : Hence he often wished to flee into the wilderness.

ing, or is it not? So that I think, if God has given me any measure of understanding, I could not mistake him much.

“ As soon as I came home, I besought God to assist me, and not suffer *the blind to go out of the way*. I then wrote down what I conceived to be the difference between us, in the following words :—

“ As to *faith*, you believe,

“ 1. There are *no degrees of faith*, and that no man has *any degree* of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception, that Christ dwelleth in him.

“ 2. Accordingly you believe, there is *no justifying faith*, or state of justification, short of this.

“ 3. Therefore you believe, that that gift of God, which many received since Peter Boehler came into England, viz. ‘ A sure confidence of the love of God to *them*,’ was *not justifying faith*.

“ 4. And, that the *joy and love* attending it, were from *animal spirits*, from *nature or imagination*; not *joy in the Holy Ghost*, and the real *love of God*, shed abroad in their hearts.

“ Whereas I believe,

“ 1. There are *degrees in faith*, and that a man may have *some degree* of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him.

“ 2. Accordingly, I believe there is *a degree of justifying faith* (and consequently a state of justification) short of, and commonly antecedent to, this.

“ 3. And, I believe that that gift of God, which many received since Peter Boehler came into England, viz. ‘ A

sure confidence of the love of God to *them*,' was *justifying faith*.

“ 4. And that the *joy* and *love* attending it, were *not* from *animal spirits*, from *nature* or *imagination* ; but a measure of *joy* in the Holy Ghost, and of *the love of God* shed abroad in their hearts.

“ As to *the way to faith*, you believe,

“ That the way to attain it is, to *wait* for Christ, and be *still*: i. e.,

“ Not to use (what *we* term) the *means of grace* ; not to go to church ; not to communicate ; not to fast ; not to use *so much* private prayer ; not to read the Scripture ; (because you believe, these are *not means of grace*, i. e. do not ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers ; and, that it is impossible for a man to *use* them, without *trusting* in them.)

“ Not to do temporal good : Nor to attempt doing spiritual good ; because you believe, no fruit of the Spirit is given, by those who have it not themselves. And, that those who have not faith are utterly blind, and therefore unable to guide other souls.

“ Whereas I believe,

“ The way to attain it is, To *wait* for Christ and be *still* :

“ In using *all means of grace*.

“ Therefore I believe it right, for him who knows he has not faith, (i. e. that conquering faith,)

“ To go to church ; to communicate ; to fast ; to use as much private prayer as he can, and to read the Scripture ; (because I believe, these are *means of grace*, i. e. do ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers : and, that it is possible for a man to *use* them, without *trusting* in them).

“ To do all temporal good he can ; and to endeavour after doing spiritual good : Because I know, many fruits of the Spirit are given, by those who have them not themselves ; and that those who have not faith, or but in the lowest degree,

may have more light from God, more wisdom for the guiding of other souls, than many that are strong in faith.

“As to the *manner of propagating* the faith, you believe, (as I have also heard others affirm,)

“That we may, on some accounts, *use guile* :

“By saying what we know will *deceive* the hearers, or lead them to think the thing which is not : by describing things a *little beyond the truth*, in order to their *coming up to it* : and by speaking, *as if* we meant what we do not.

“But I believe, that we may not *use guile*, on any account whatsoever : That we may not on any account say what we know will, and design should, deceive the hearers : That we may not describe things one jot *beyond the truth*, whether they *come up to it*, or no ; and that we may not speak, on any pretence, *as if* we meant what indeed we do not.

“LASTLY, As to the fruits of your thus propagating the faith in England, you believe,

“Much good has been done by it ; many unsettled from a false foundation ; many brought into *true stillness*, in order to their coming to the true foundation : Some grounded thereon ; who were wrong before, but are right now.

“On the contrary, I believe, that very little good, but much hurt, has been done by it : Many, who were beginning to build holiness and good works, on the true foundation of faith in Jesus, being now wholly unsettled and lost in vain reasonings and doubtful disputations : Many others being brought into a *false* unscriptural *stillness* ; so that they are not likely to come to any true foundation : and many being grounded on a faith which is without works ; so that they who were right before, are wrong now.”

His attention to these things did not hinder him from being still abundant in labours. He now visited many parts of Devonshire, where multitudes heard him gladly. He continued also from time to time his usual labours in and near

Bristol: And at the earnest invitation of Mr. Howell Harris of Breconshire, he made a second visit to Wales.

But the vain reasonings and disputings, mentioned above, again revived in London; the effects of which were, that not one in ten of the believers retained his "*first love*;" and most of the rest were in the utmost confusion. "I found," says he, "more and more undeniable proofs, that the Christian state is a *continual warfare*, and that we have need every moment to '*watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.*' Outward trials indeed were now removed, and '*Peace was in all our borders.*' But so much the more did inward trials abound; and, '*if one member suffered, all the members suffered with it.*' So strange a sympathy did I never observe before! Whatever considerable temptation fell on any one, unaccountably spreading itself to the rest, so that exceeding few were able to escape it."

Finding there was no time to delay, without utterly destroying what he believed to be the cause of God, he resolved to strike at the root of the grand delusion; and accordingly, from the words of Jeremiah, "*Stand in the way; ask for the old paths,*" he gave an account of the work of God among them from the beginning, bearing, at the same time, the most unequivocal testimony against the unscriptural, mischievous refinements, lately introduced to the weakening, if not destroying, the faith of many.

The hearts of most of the brethren in London, became now quite estranged from Mr. Wesley. A few, however, still cleaved to him, and strengthened him much. He still hoped that the rest would yet hear the Scripture, and return to the faith and love which they once enjoyed. But finding on the contrary that they laboured to pervert the few who were faithful, he saw nothing remained but that he should give them up to God; which he did in the most solemn manner, on Sunday, July 20, 1740. At the conclusion of the evening

service, he read a paper, containing a short statement of those doctrines which had been lately introduced among them ; after which, he added the following words :

“ I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the law and to the testimony. I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains, but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me.”

When he had thus spoken, he withdrew, as did eighteen or nineteen of the Society.

Some time after this, Count Zinzendorff, who arrived in England after the commencement of the dispute, having desired an interview with Mr. Wesley, he met the Count by appointment in Gray's-Inn Walks, on Thursday, the 3d day of September, 1741. Mr. Wesley observes,—“ The most material part of our conversation, (which I dare not conceal,) was as follows.” I have subjoined a literal translation.

Z. Cur religionem tuam mutâsti ?

W Nescio me religionem meam mutâsse. Cur id sentis ?  
Quis hoc tibi retulit ?

Z. Planè tu. Id ex epistolâ tuâ ad nos video. Ibi, religionem, quam apud nos professus es, relictâ, novam profiteris.

W Quî sic ? Non intelligo.

#### TRANSLATION.

Z. Why have you changed your religion ?

W I do not know that I have changed my religion. Why do you think so ? Who has reported this to you ?

Z. Plainly, yourself. I see it from your epistle to us. There, having departed from the religion which you professed among us, you have held out a new one.

W How so ? I do not understand you

Z. Imò, istic dicis, verè Christianos non esse miseros peccatores. Falsissimum. Optimi hominum ad mortem usque miserabilissimi sunt peccatores. Siqui aliud dicunt, vel penitus impostores sunt, vel diabolicè seducti. Nostros fratres meliora docentes impugnâsti. Et pacem volentibus, eam denegâsti.

W Nondum intelligo quid velis.

Z. Ego, cum ex Georgiâ ad me scripsisti, te dilexi plurimum. Tum corde simplicem te agnovi. Iterum scripsisti. Agnovi corde simplicem, sed turbatis ideis. Ad nos venisti. Ideæ tuæ tum magis turbatæ erant & confusæ. In Angliam redûisti. Aliquandiu post, audi vi fratres nostros tecum pugnare. Spangenbergium misi ad pacem inter vos conciliandam. Scripsit mihi, fratres tibi injuriam intulisse. Rescripsi, ne pergerent, sed & veniam à te peterent. Spangenberg scripsit

#### TRANSLATION.

Z Nay, you say there, that Christians are not miserable sinners: This is most false. The best of men are most miserable sinners, even unto death. If any speak otherwise, they are either manifest impostors, or diabolically seduced. Our brethren, who taught better things, you have opposed; and when they desired peace, you have refused it.

W I do not yet understand what you aim at.

Z. When you wrote to me from Georgia, I loved you very much. I perceived that you were simple in heart. You wrote again: I saw, that you were still simple in heart, but troubled in your ideas. You came to us: Your ideas were then still more troubled and confused. You returned to England. A little after, I heard that our Brethren were contending with you. I sent Spangenberg, to make peace between you. He wrote to me, that the Brethren had injured you. I wrote again, that they should not pursue the strife, but desire forgiveness of you. Spangenberg wrote again, that

iterum, eos petiisse : Sed te gloriari de iis, pacem nolle Jam adveniens, idem audio.

W Res in eo cardine minimè vertitur. Fratres tui (verum hoc) me malè tractârunt. Postea veniam petierunt. Respondi, id supervacaneum ; me nunquam iis succensuisse : Sed vereri, (1.) Ne falsa docerent. (2.) Ne pravè viverent.

Ista unica, est, & fuit, inter nos quæstio.

Z. Apertiùs loquaris.

W Veritus sum, ne falsa docerent, (1.) De fine fidei nostræ (in hâc vitâ) scil. Christianâ perfectione. (2.) De mediis gratiæ, sic ab Ecclesiâ nostrâ dictis.

Z. Nullam inhærentem perfectionem in hâc vitâ agnosco. Est hic error errorum. Eum per totum orbem igne & gladio persequor, conculco, ad internecionem do. Christus est sola

## TRANSLATION.

they had desired this, but that you, glorying over them, had refused peace. Now that I am come, I hear the same thing.

W The matter does not at all turn on this point. Your Brethren, it is true, did not use me well. Afterward they desired forgiveness. I answered,—that was superfluous, that I had never been offended with them ; but I feared, (1.) lest they should teach falsely ; (2.) lest they should live wickedly. This is, and was, the only question between us.

Z. Speak more fully [on that question].

W. I feared lest they should teach falsely ; (1.) Concerning the end of our faith in this life, to wit, Christian Perfection. (2.) Concerning the means of grace, so termed by our church.

Z. I acknowledge no inherent perfection in this life. This is the error of errors. I pursue it through the world with fire and sword. I trample upon it : I devote it to utter destruction.



perfectio nostra. Qui perfectionem inhærentem sequitur, Christum denegat.

W. Ego verò credo, Spiritum Christi operari perfectionem in vere Christianis.

Z. Nullimodo. Omnis nostra perfectio est in Christo. Omnis Christiana perfectio est, fides in sanguine Christi. Est tota Christiana Perfectio, imputata, non inhærens. Perfecti sumus in Christo, in nobismet nunquam perfecti.

W Pugnamus, opinor, de verbis. Nonne omnis verè credens sanctus est?

Z. Maximè. Sed sanctus in Christo, non in se.

W. Sed, nonne sanctè vivit?

Z. Imò, sanctè in omnibus vivit.

W Nonne, & cor sanctum habet?

Z. Certissimè.

W. Nonne, ex consequenti, sanctus est *in se*?

#### TRANSLATION.

Christ is our sole perfection. Whoever follows inherent perfection, denies Christ.

W But, I believe, that the Spirit of Christ works this perfection in true Christians.

Z. By no means. All our perfection is in Christ. All Christian Perfection is, Faith in the blood of Christ. Our whole Christian Perfection is imputed, not inherent. We are perfect in Christ: In ourselves we are never perfect.

W I think we strive about words. Is not every true believer holy?

Z. Highly so. But he is holy in Christ, not in himself.

W. But does he not live holy?

Z. Yes, he lives holy in all things.

W And has he not a holy heart?

Z. Most certainly.

W And is he not consequently holy *in himself*?

Z. Non, non. In Christo tantùm. Non sanctus *in se*. Nullam, omnino, habet sanctitatem *in se*.

W. Nonne habet in corde suo amorem Dei & proximi, quin & totam imaginem Dei?

Z. Habet. Sed hæc sunt sanctitas legalis, non evangelica. Sanctitas evangelica est fides.

W. Omnino lis est de verbis. Concedis, credentis cor totum esse sanctum & vitam totam: Eum amare Deum toto corde, eique servire totis viribus. Nihil ultrà peto. Nil aliud volo per perfectio vel sanctitas Christiana.

Z. Sed hæc non est sanctitas ejus. Non magis sanctus est, si magis amat; neque minùs sanctus, si minus amat.

W. Quid? Nonne credens, dum crescit in amore, crescit pariter in sanctitate?

Z. Nequaquam. Eo momento quo justificatur, sanctifi-

## TRANSLATION.

Z. No, no. In Christ only. He is not holy in himself: He hath no holiness at all in himself.

W. Hath he not the *love of God*, and his neighbour, in his heart? Yea, and the whole image of God?

Z. He hath. But these constitute legal holiness, not evangelical. Evangelical holiness is Faith.

W. The dispute is altogether about words. You grant that a believer is altogether holy in heart and life: That he loves God with all his heart, and serves him with all his powers. I desire nothing more. I mean nothing else [by the term] PERFECTION, or CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

Z. But this is not his holiness. He is not more holy if he loves more, or less holy, if he loves less.

W. What! Does not every believer, while he increases in love, increase equally in holiness?

Z. Not at all. In the moment he is justified, he is sancti-

catur penitùs. Exin, neque magis sanctus est, neque minùs sanctus, ad mortem usque.

W. Nonne igitur pater in Christo sanctior est infante recens nato?

Z. Non. Sanctificatio totalis ac justificatio in eodem sunt instanti; & neutra recipit magis aut minùs.

W. Nonne verò credens crescit indies amore Dei? Num perfectus est amore simulac justificatur?

Z. Est. Non unquam crescit in amore Dei. Totalitèr amat eo momento, sicut totalitèr sanctificatur.

W. Quid itaque vult Apostolus Paulus, per *Renovamur de die in diem*?

Z. Dicam. Plumbum si in aurum mutetur, est aurum primo die, & secundo, & tertio. Et sic renovatur de die in diem. Sed nunquam est magis aurum, quàm primo die.

W. Putavi, crescendum esse in gratiâ!

#### TRANSLATION.

fied wholly. From that time he is neither more nor less holy, even unto death.

W. Is not therefore a father in Christ holier than a new-born babe?

Z. No. Our whole justification, and sanctification, are in the same instant, and he receives neither more nor less.

W. Does not a true believer increase in love to God daily? Is he *perfected in love* when he is justified?

Z. He is. He never can increase in the love of God. He loves altogether in that moment, as he is sanctified wholly.

W. What therefore does the Apostle Paul mean by, '*We are renewed day by day*'?

Z. I will tell you. Lead, if it should be changed into gold, is gold the first day, and the second day, and the third: And so it is renewed day by day; but it never is more gold than in the first day.

W. I thought that we should grow in grace!

Z. Certè. Sed non in sanctitate. Simulac justificatur quis, Pater, Filius & Spiritus Sanctus habitant in ipsius corde. Et cor ejus eo momento æquè purum est ac unquam erit. Infans in Christo tam purus corde est quàm Pater in Christo. Nulla est discrepantia.

W Nonne justificati erant Apostoli ante Christi mortem?

Z. Erant.

W Nonne vero sanctiores erant post diem Pentecostes, quàm ante Christi mortem?

Z. Neutiquam.

W Nonne eo die impleti sunt Spiritu Sancto?

Z. Erant. Sed istud donum Spiritûs, sanctitatem ipsorum non respexit. Fuit donum miraculorum tantum.

W Fortasse te non capio. Nonne nos ipsos abnegantes, magis magisque mundo morimur, ac Deo vivimus?

#### TRANSLATION.

Z. Certainly ; but not in holiness. Whenever any one is justified, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, dwell in his heart ; and from that moment his heart is as pure as it ever will be. A babe in Christ is as pure in heart as a father in Christ. There is no difference.

W Were not the Apostles justified before the death of Christ?

Z. They were.

W But were they not more holy after the day of Pentecost, than before Christ's death?

Z. By no means.

W Were they not on that day *filled with the Holy Ghost*?

Z. They were. But that gift of the Spirit did not respect their holiness. It was the gift of miracles only.

W Perhaps I do not comprehend your meaning. Do we not, while we deny ourselves, die more and more to the world and live to God?

Z. Abnegationem omnem respuimus, conculcamus. Facimus credentes omne quod volumus & nihil ultrà. Mortificationem omnem ridemus. Nulla purificatio præcedit perfectum amorem.

W Quæ dixisti, Deo adjuvante, perpendam.

### TRANSLATION.

Z. We reject all self-denial. We trample upon it. We do, as Believers, whatsoever we will, and nothing more. We laugh at all mortification. No purification precedes perfect love.

W What you have said I will thoroughly weigh, God being my helper.

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The Count, and those connected with him, were, I believe, the only persons who held the Antimonian Doctrine without the aid of Absolute Predestination; but it cannot stand without that support. Only the supposed *absolute* decrees can, with any face, be brought forward to oppose and make void the openly declared will of God.

Mr. Southey has given to his readers a part of the above conversation. He speaks tenderly of the Count, and of that Gospel which *flesh and blood had revealed unto him*. He supposes the Count meant better than he expressed himself; and this too is our hope, as it was Mr. Wesley's. The doctrine laid down, however, is equally absurd and dangerous; though in some of the particulars, it illustrates what Mr. Wesley declared in one of the first Conferences, that "Antimonianism comes often within an hair's breadth of the truth of the Gospel," though it certainly never can unite with it. Mr. Southey seems to blame Mr. Wesley for publishing the conversation; and also for publishing it in Latin. Mr. Wesley often suppressed what he had noted in his Journal, when he came to publish it, which was always three years after it was writ-

ten. But considering the Count's prominent character, and influence, and his own former connexion with the Moravians, he could not, (as indeed he intimates,) suppress a statement of doctrines, which he thought so dangerous both to the Count's people, and to his own. His publishing it in the language in which it was spoken, is an instance at once of fairness and of tenderness. He knew that several of the Moravians could read it in that language; and that it would be read by the learned in his own church, who were jealous of him respecting those doctrines, and had even imputed them to him. At the same time, he wished to spare the Count with the commonalty. He was always careful how he taught the sheep to butt.

When Mr. Stonehouse, (afterwards Sir James,) the Rector of Islington, read the conversation, he observed, as Mr. Wesley informed me, "The Count is a clever fellow; but the genius of Methodism is too strong for him." It was so; not because of the superior cleverness of its Founder, or of his Helpers, but because it was *a work of God*.

But he still loved and esteemed the people, from whom he was now obliged to separate himself. As a proof of this, he observes in the Address to the Moravian Church, which he annexed to an account of the whole transaction, and soon afterwards published,—

*"I have delayed thus long, because I loved you, and was therefore unwilling to grieve you in any thing; and likewise because I was afraid of creating another obstacle to that union, which, (if I know my own heart in any degree,) I desire above all things under heaven. But I dare no longer delay, lest my silence should be a snare to any others of the children of God; and lest you yourselves should be more confirmed in what I cannot reconcile to the law and the testimony. This would strengthen the bar which I long to remove. And were that once taken out of the way, I should rejoice to be a door-keeper in the house of God, a hewer of wood or drawer of water among*

*you. Surely I would follow you to the ends of the earth, or remain with you in the uttermost parts of the sea.*

*“ What unites my heart to you is, the excellency, (in many respects,) of the doctrine taught among you ; your laying the true foundation, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, your declaring the free grace of God the cause, and faith the condition, of justification ; your bearing witness to those great fruits of faith, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost ; and that sure mark thereof, he that is born of God, doth not commit sin.*

*“ I magnify the grace of God which is in many among you, enabling you to love him who hath first loved us ; teaching you, in whatsoever state you are, therewith to be content : Causing you to trample under foot the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; and, above all, giving you to love one another, in a manner the world knoweth not of.*

*“ I praise God, that he hath delivered and yet doth deliver you from those outward sins that overspread the face of the earth. No cursing, no light or false swearing, no profaning the name of God is heard among you ; no robbery or theft, no gluttony, or drunkenness, no whoredom or adultery, no quarrelling or brawling, (those scandals of the Christian name,) are found within your gates ; no diversions, but such as become saints, as may be used in the name of the Lord Jesus. You regard not outward adorning, but rather desire the ornament of a serious, meek, and quiet spirit. You are not slothful in business, but labour to eat your own bread ; and wisely manage the Mammon of unrighteousness, that ye may have to give to others also, to feed the hungry, and cover the naked with a garment.”*

It is here necessary to observe, that Mr. Wesley's objections to the Moravians, with whom he had been connected, (though without leaving the Church of England,) from the

beginning of his acquaintance with Peter Boehler, were not levelled at the whole body, but only at that part of it which resided in London.\*

He now met his little Society at his Preaching-house near Moorfields, which was generally known by the name of the Foundery, because it was originally built for the casting of cannon. In this place he also regularly preached. His word was owned of God, and his Society rapidly increased. He therefore now saw it necessary to draw up, jointly with his brother, rules for his Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and other parts of the kingdom; and as they contain as fine a system of Christian ethics, as ever was perhaps drawn up in so small a compass, and have been the rules by which, since that time, the whole Connexion has been governed, I think it my indispensable duty to give them a place in the present history.

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I. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies, *a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins*: But, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shewn by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

FIRST, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially, that which is most generally practised. Such is

The taking the name of God in vain:

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or buying or selling:

Drunkenness, *buying or selling spirituous liquors; or drinking them*, unless in cases of extreme necessity:

\* Peter Boehler, several years after, in a private letter to Mr. Wesley, denied that *Molther* ever held the opinions imputed to him. From a review of the facts, it appears probable that *Molther's* jealousy of Mr. Wesley's ability and influence occasioned his pertinacity in those opinions.



*Fighting, quarrelling, brawling ; brother going to law with brother ; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing : The using many words in buying or selling :*

*The buying or selling uncustomed goods :*

*The giving or taking things on usury : i. e., unlawful interest :*

*Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation ; particularly speaking evil of magistrates, or of ministers :*

*Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us :*

*Doing what we know is not for the glory of God :*

*As, The putting on of gold or costly apparel :*

*The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus :*

*The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God :*

*Softness, and needless self-indulgence :*

*Laying up treasure upon earth :*

*Borrowing without a probability of paying ; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.*

II. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

SECONDLY, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as is possible, to all men :

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with ; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that “ We are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*”

By doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be ; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in busi-

ness; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them *only*.

By all possible *diligence and frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race that is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily*; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ; to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking, that men should “*say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord’s sake.*”

III. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

THIRDLY, By attending on all the ordinances of God:—such are,

The public worship of God: The ministry of the word, either read or expounded:

The Supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting or abstinence.

These are the general rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these, we know, his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

JOHN WESLEY  
CHARLES WESLEY

## CHAPTER III.

DISPUTE RESPECTING ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION—PARTIAL SEPARATION OF MR. WHITEFIELD. — RECEIVING LAY-HELPERS.—PROGRESS OF ITINERANCY. — THE POWER OF RELIGION MANIFESTED IN THE HAPPY DEATH OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

MR. WESLEY now went on with his labours, and with the same success. Multitudes, as before, attended his ministry, and many, renouncing ungodliness, were brought into the liberty of the Gospel. Many also were the witnesses, who, after patiently suffering the afflictions which the Lord was pleased to lay upon them, resigned their souls into the hands of God, with triumphant praise and joy.

For a considerable time Mr. Whitefield continued to labour in union with him ; and sometimes they appeared in the pulpit together. Mr. Whitefield, on his second visit to America, was well received by many pious ministers in the northern states. Almost all these were of Mr. Calvin's sentiments, and asserted absolute Predestination. Mr. Whitefield being edified by their piety, began in a little time to relish their creed. They strongly recommended to him the writings of the Puritan divines, which he from that time read with much pleasure, approving all he found therein, as he informs Mr. Wesley in a letter which he wrote to him on the subject. The consequence was, that on his return to England, he could not join his old friend in the work of the ministry, with the same cordiality as before.

As Mr. Wesley fully believed, and firmly asserted, that  
*“ God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should*

*come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved,*" he had now another error to oppose. The Calvinistic sentiments had been long held by a great part of the dissenting congregations, but did not appear for some time among those who were converted in the present revival of religion. This however was not of long continuance.

"One evening," says Mr. Wesley, "Mr. Acourt complained, that Mr. Nowers had hindered his going into the Society. Mr. Nowers answered, it was by Mr. C. Wesley's order. 'What,' says Mr. A——, 'do you refuse admitting 'a person into your Society, only because he differs from you 'in opinion?'—I answered No. But what opinion do you mean?—He said, 'That of election. I hold a certain 'number is elected from eternity. And these must and 'shall be saved. And the rest of mankind must and shall 'be damned. And many of your Society hold the same.'—I replied, I never asked whether they held it or no. Only let them not trouble others by disputing about it.—He said, 'Nay, but I *will* dispute about it.'—What, wherever you come?—'Yes, wherever I come.'—Why then would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?—'Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right.'—I fear your coming, with this view, would neither profit you nor us.—He concluded, 'Then I will go 'and tell all the world, that you and your brother are false 'prophets. And I tell you, in one fortnight you will all be 'in confusion.'"

Soon after this, the copy of a letter, written by Mr. Whitefield to Mr. Wesley, was printed without the permission of either, and great numbers of copies were given to the people, both at the door of the Foundery and in the house itself. Mr. Wesley having procured one of them, related (after preaching) the naked fact to the congregation, and told them, "I will do just what I believe Mr. Whitefield would, were he here himself." Upon which, he tore it in pieces before them all. Every one

who had received it, did the same: So that, in two minutes, there was not a whole copy left. “ Ah, poor Ahithophel !” added Mr. Wesley,

“ Ibi, omnis effusus labor !”\*

The disturbance, however, which this opinion occasioned at Bristol, and the parts adjacent, was not so soon or so easily quieted. Mr. Wesley had permitted an excellent young man, Mr. Cennick, afterwards a Minister of the Moravian church, to pray with and exhort the Society at Kingswood, as well as to superintend the school during his absence. Mr. Cennick now embraced the doctrine of the *Decrees* ; and, soon after, seems to have lost all love and respect for his former friend, speaking against him and his doctrine with much contempt and bitterness. The consequence was, that, after some fruitless efforts to heal the breach, Mr. Cennick departed, and carried off with him about fifty of the society, whom he formed into a separate connection. Mr. Wesley mourned over this young man in such a manner, as evinced that he held him in high esteem. There is reason to believe, that Mr. Cennick was afterwards convinced of his mistake, and lived many years an active and successful Minister of the Gospel.

The contention which had arisen still continuing, Mr. Wesley printed a sermon against the Calvinistic notion of Predestination, and sent a copy to Commissary Garden, at Charlestown, where Mr. Whitefield met with it. He had already embraced that opinion ; and though the subject was treated in that sermon in a general way, without naming or pointing at any individual, yet he found himself hurt, that Mr. Wesley should bring forward the controversy, and publicly oppose an opinion which he believed to be agreeable to the word of God. On his passage to England, he wrote to Mr. Charles Wesley, February 1, 1741, expostulating with

\* There, all your labour's lost !

him and his brother on the subject. He says, "My dear, dear brethren, why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination? Why did you, in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymn-book? How can you say, you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon over against election,\* to Mr. Garden, and others in America? Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge, I always was, and hope I always shall be, desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ; and that I cannot *now* do, without speaking of election."—He then tells Mr. Charles, that, in Christmas week, he had written an answer to his brother's sermon, "which," says he, "is now printing at Charlestown; another copy I have sent to Boston; and another I now bring with me, to print in London. If it occasion a strangeness between us, it shall not be my fault. There is nothing in my answer exciting to it, that I know of. O my dear brethren, my heart almost bleeds within me! Methinks I could be willing to tarry here on the waters for ever, rather than come to England to oppose you."

Dr. Whitehead has observed upon this dispute, that "controversy between good men is commonly on some speculative opinion, while they are perfectly at unison on the *essential* points of religion, and the duties of morality: And the controversy almost always injures the Christian temper, much more than it promotes the interests of speculative truth." This is not, however, a necessary consequence. Our Lord was a controversialist. Without controversy, we had been all

\* *All this* was consistent. It was not disputing with *him*, but maintaining the truth. Mr. Wesley never opposed the scriptural doctrine of the election of *believers* to eternal life. He only opposed Mr. Calvin's notion of it, which he believed to be unscriptural and dangerous.

Heathens or Papists at this day. On this occasion, however, a separation took place between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, so far as to have different places of worship; and some warm expressions dropped from each. But their good opinion of each other's integrity and usefulness, founded on long and intimate acquaintance, could not be injured by such a difference of sentiment; and their mutual affection was only obscured by a cloud for a season.

Mr. Whitefield was the first who visited the colliers of Kingswood: He formed the design of building the school there, and began to make collections for the purpose. But his calls to America would not permit him to prosecute the design, which he therefore transferred to Mr. Wesley. Being now less friendly than before, Mr. Whitefield was more disposed to find fault with little things, and to misconstrue the bare appearances of others. He wrote a list of things which he thought improperly managed. In April, Mr. Wesley returned him a long answer, part of which is as follows:

“Would you have me deal plainly with you, my brother? I believe you would: Then, by the grace of God, I will.

“Of many things I find you are not rightly informed; of others you speak what you have not well weighed.

“The Society-room at Bristol, you say, is adorned. How? Why, with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk; two sconces for eight candles each in the middle; and—nay, I know no more. Now, which of these can be spared I know not; nor would I desire either more adorning or less.

“But, ‘lodgings are made for me or my brother.’ That is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school, where I speak to the persons who come to me; and a garret, in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother, my son Whitefield?

“You say further, ‘that the children at Bristol are clothed as well as taught.’ I am sorry for it; for the cloth is not paid for yet, and was bought without my consent or knowledge.

But those of Kingswood have been neglected. This is not so, notwithstanding the heavy debt which lay upon it. One master and one mistress have been in the house, ever since it was capable of receiving them. A second master has been placed there some months since ; and I have long been seeking for two proper mistresses ; so that as much has been done, as matters stand, if not more, than I can answer to God or man.

“ Hitherto, then, there is no ground for the heavy charge of perverting your design for the poor colliers. Two years since, your design was to build them a school, that their children also might be taught to fear the Lord. To this end, you collected some money more than once ; how much I cannot say, till I have my papers. But this I know, it was not near one half of what has been expended on the work. This design you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I will be bold to say, you have not yet met with in your life. For many months, I collected money wherever I was, and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay ; and then it was that I took possession of it in my own name ; that is, when the foundation was laid ; and I immediately made my will, fixing my brother and you to succeed me therein.

“ But it is a poor case, that you and I should be talking thus. Indeed, these things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have borne testimony to what you call ‘ the truth.’ If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name : This had been fair and friendly.

“ You rank all the maintainers of *universal Redemption* with Socinians themselves. Alas ! my brother, do you not know even this, that the Socinians allow no redemption at all ? That Socinus himself speaks thus, *Tota Redemptio nostra per*



*Christum, metaphora?* :\* And says expressly, ‘ Christ did not die as a ransom for any, but only as an example for all mankind?’ How easy were it for me to hit many other palpable blots, in that which you call an ‘ answer to my sermon!’ And how above measure contemptible would you then appear to all impartial men, either of sense or learning? But I spare you; mine hand shall not be upon you: The Lord be judge between me and thee! The general tenor both of my public and private exhortations, when I touch thereon at all, as even my enemies know if they would testify, is, ‘ *Spare the young man, even Absalom, for my sake.*’ ”

Dr. Whitehead remarks upon this letter also: “ Perhaps, Mr. Wesley, in consequence of his age and learning, assumed, in this letter, a greater superiority over Mr. Whitefield than was prudent or becoming.” No, not between fellow-labourers and intimate friends, in a private letter: And perhaps Dr. W., holding this opinion, ought not to have published it. It was not possible, however, that the controversy could long abate the ardent affection which each had for the other. In the latter end of the following year, Mr. Whitefield wrote to him as follows: “ I long to hear from you, and write this, hoping to have an answer. I rejoice to hear, the Lord blesses your labours. May you be blessed in bringing souls to Christ more and more! I believe we shall go on best when we only preach the simple Gospel, and do not interfere with each other’s plan. Our Lord exceedingly blesses us at the Tabernacle. I doubt not but he deals in the same bountiful manner with you. I was at your letter-day† on Monday. Brother Charles has been pleased to come and see me twice. Behold, what a happy thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! That the whole Christian world may all become of one heart and one mind; and that *we*, in particular, though differing in judgment, may be examples of mutual, fervent, undissembled affection, is the hearty prayer of, Rev. and dear Sir, your most

\* The whole of our Redemption by Christ is a metaphor.

† An evening set apart for reading letters concerning the work of God in various parts.

affectionate, though most unworthy younger brother in the kingdom and patience of Jesus.”—We see here the true Christian spirit between those who differ only in opinion.

Mr. Wesley’s answer to this letter, I believe, is lost; but it appears from one Mr. Whitefield wrote to him about a fortnight after, that he had answered it in the same spirit of peace and brotherly love. “I thank you,” says Mr. Whitefield, “for your kind answer to my last. Had it come a few hours sooner, I should have read some part of it amongst our other letters. Dear Sir, who would be troubled with a party spirit? May our Lord make all his children free from it indeed!”

From this time, their mutual regard and friendly intercourse suffered no interruption till Mr. Whitefield’s death; who says, in his last will, written with his own hand about six months before he died, “I leave a mourning-ring to my honoured and dear friends, and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine.”\*—When the news of Mr. Whitefield’s death reached London, Mr. Keen, one of his executors, recollecting he had often said to him “If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley?” And having constantly received for answer, “He is the man,” Mr. Keen accordingly waited on Mr. Wesley, and engaged him to preach it; which he did, and bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, the ardent zeal, and the extensive usefulness, of his much-loved and honoured friend.†

I cannot give so complete an idea of the earnest desire of Mr. Wesley to continue his Christian union with Mr. Whitefield, as by inserting, in his own words, the concessions which he made for the accomplishment of so desirable an end.

\* See Robert’s Life of Whitefield, page 256.

† Ibid. page 230. Mr. Whitefield died in September, 1770.

“ Having found for some time,” says he, “ a strong desire to unite with Mr. Whitefield, as far as possible, to cut off needless dispute, I wrote down my sentiments, as plain as I could, in the following terms :

“ There are three points in debate—(1.) Unconditional election. (2.) Irresistible grace. (3.) Final perseverance.

“ With regard to the first, unconditional election, I believe,

“ That God, before the foundation of the world, did *unconditionally elect* certain persons to do certain works, as Paul to preach the Gospel :

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to receive peculiar privileges, the Jewish nation in particular :

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to hear the Gospel, as England and Scotland now, and many others in past ages :

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some persons to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things :

“ And I do not deny, (though I cannot prove it is so,)

“ That he has *unconditionally elected* some persons, thence eminently styled ‘ the elect,’ to eternal glory.

“ But I cannot believe,

“ That all those who are *not* thus *elected* to glory, *must* perish everlastingly : Or

“ That there is one soul on earth who has not, nor ever had, *a possibility* of escaping eternal damnation.

“ With regard to the second, irresistible grace, I believe,

“ That the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible *at that moment*.

“ That most believers may remember some time when God did *irresistibly* convince them of sin :

“ That most believers do, at some other times, find God *irresistibly* acting upon their souls :

“ Yet I believe, that the grace of God, both before and after those moments, may be, and hath been, resisted : And

“ That, in general, it does not act *irresistibly*, but we *may* comply therewith, or *may* not.

“ And I do not deny,

“ That in those eminently styled ‘ the elect,’ (if such there be,) the grace of God is so far *irresistible*, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved.

“ But I cannot believe,

“ That all those *must* be damned, in whom it does not *thus irresistibly* work : Or

“ That there is one soul on earth who has not, and never had, any other grace, than such as does, in fact, increase his damnation, and was designed of God so to do.

“ With regard to the third, final perseverance, I believe,

“ That there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall :

“ That he has attained this who is, according to St. Paul’s account, ‘ *a new creature* ;’ that is, who can say, ‘ *Old things are passed away ; all things*’ in me ‘ *are become new.*’

“ And I do not deny,

“ That all those eminently styled ‘ the elect,’ will infallibly persevere to the end.”

Mr. Wesley told me, that, *at the time he wrote this*, he believed, (with Macarius, a writer of the fourth century,) that all who are perfected in love, 1 John iv, were thus elect. But he afterwards doubted of this.—I believe, all that can be safely held on the doctrine of the Divine Predestination, is contained in these propositions ; so rare a talent had Mr. Wesley of speaking much in few words !

As the people, who placed themselves under his care, daily increased, he was involved in a considerable difficulty : Either he must confine his labours to those whom he could visit constantly or within a short space of time, or endeavour to procure some other assistance for them. It seems, at first, he had some hopes that the Ministers of the respective parishes would watch over those who were lately turned from

the error of their ways. In this, however, he was disappointed, which induced him to try other methods; and, at last, drew forth that defence of himself, which he makes in the third part of his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion."

"It pleased God," says Mr. Wesley, "by two or three Ministers of the Church of England, to call many sinners to repentance; who, in several parts, were undeniably turned from a course of sin to a course of holiness.

"The Ministers of the places where this was done, ought to have received those Ministers with open arms; and to have taken those persons who had just begun to serve God, into their particular care; watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the devil.

"Instead of this, the greater part spoke of those Ministers, as if the devil, not God, had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord's Table; others stirred up the people against them, representing them even in their public discourses, as *fellows not fit to live; Papists, heretics, traitors; conspirators* against their *King and country*.

"And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them from the Lord's Table; to which, till now, they had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work, persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them in all manner of ways.

"The event was, that some were wearied out, and so turned back to the vomit again: And then these good pastors gloried over them, and endeavoured to shake others by their example.

"When the Ministers, by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again, if it could be begun again; but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin, that no impression could be made upon them.

“What could they do in case of so extreme necessity, where so many souls lay at stake?”

“No Clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was, to find some one among themselves who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God; and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation.”

With this view, Mr. Wesley had formerly appointed Mr. Cennick to reside at Kingswood. But the want of an assistant of this kind was particularly felt in London. The Society in that city had recently and deeply experienced the mischievous effects of that instruction, which is not according to the oracles of God: And, therefore, when he was about to leave London for a season, he appointed one whom he judged to be strong in faith, and of an exemplary conversation, to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them, and give them such advice as might be needful. This was Mr. Maxfield, one of the first-fruits of his ministry at Bristol. This young man, being fervent in spirit, and *mighty in the Scriptures*, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him; and, by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go further than he had, at first, designed. He began to *preach*, and the Lord so blessed the word, that many were not only deeply awakened and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion,—inward peace, and power to walk in all holiness,—evinced the work to be of God.

Some, however, were offended at this *irregularity*, as it was termed. A complaint was made in form to Mr. Wesley, and he hastened to London, in order to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining to the Foundery. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause.—

“ Thomas Maxfield,” said he, abruptly, “ has turned Preacher, I find.” She looked attentively at him, and replied, “ John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself.” He did so. His prejudice bowed before the force of truth, and he could only say, “ *It is the Lord: Let him do what seemeth him good.*”

In other places also, the same assistance was afforded. It appears, indeed, from what he has said at various times, that he only *submitted with reluctance to it*. His High Church principles stood in his way. But such effects were produced, that he frequently found himself in the predicament of Peter ; who, being questioned in a matter somewhat similar, could only relate the fact, and say “ *What was I, that I could withstand God?*”

But the Lord was about to shew him still greater things than these. An honest man, a mason, of Birstal in Yorkshire, whose name was John Nelson, coming up to London to work at his trade, heard *that word* which he found to be the “ *power of God unto salvation.*” Nelson had full business in London and large wages. But, from the time of his finding peace with God, it was continually on his mind, that he must return to his native place. He did so, about Christmas in the year 1740. His relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire, “ What he thought of this new faith ? And whether he believed there was any such thing, as a man’s knowing that his sins were forgiven ?” John told them point-blank, “ that this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the Gospel ; and that he himself was as sure his sins were forgiven, as he could be of the shining of the sun.” This was soon noised abroad ; and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof

of the great truths, which such enquiries naturally led him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare, and enforce, several parts of Scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased, so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do in the evening, as soon as he came from work. God immediately set his seal to what was spoken; and several believed, and therefore declared, that God was merciful also to their unrighteousness, and had forgiven all their sins.

Here was a Preacher and a large congregation, many of whom were happy partakers of the faith of the Gospel, raised up without the direct interference of Mr. Wesley. He, therefore, now fully acquiesced in *the order of God*, and rejoiced that *the thoughts of God were not as his confined thoughts*. His mind was enlarged with the love of God and man; and he determined more firmly than ever to spend and be spent, for the glory of his name. Nelson's Journal was afterwards published, and is now extant: And it is hard to say which is most to be admired,—the strength of his understanding, unassisted by human learning;—his zeal for the salvation of souls;—or the injuries and oppressions which he suffered from those who “*knew not what spirit they were of*.”

Mr. Wesley visited this good man at his earnest request, and from that time laboured much in Yorkshire. In no part of England has religion taken a deeper root, or had a wider spread, than in this favoured county. The people, who are numerous, are also industrious, and, in general, fully employed. They have learned to be “*diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*.” Not only in all the capital towns, but in all the villages also, numerous Societies were formed; and Christian fellowship, till then unknown, has given to religion a stability and a beauty, which can hardly be conceived by those who know it not.

After Mr. Wesley had separated from the Moravians, some



who had been his friends, left him, and became more closely united to that people; and even his brother Charles was, at this time, wavering. On this occasion, Mr. Wesley sent him the following letter, dated London, April 21, 1741. “I am settling,” says he, “the regular method of visiting the sick here: Eight or ten have offered themselves for the work, who are likely to have full employment; for more and more are taken ill every day. Our Lord will thoroughly purge his floor.

“I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let our love be without dissimulation.—I am not clear that brother Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound-lane; nor can I, as yet, do without him. Our clergymen have increased full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen, I know not.

“As yet I dare, in no wise, join with the Moravians:—(1.) Because their whole scheme is *mystical*, not *scriptural*,—refined, in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the Gospel. (2.) Because there is darkness and closeness in all their behaviour, and guile in almost all their words. (3.) Because they not only do not practise, but utterly despise and deny self-denial and the daily cross. (4.) Because they, upon principle, conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel. (5.) Because they extend Christian liberty in this and many other respects, beyond what is warranted by holy writ. (6.) Because they are, by no means, zealous of good works; or, at least, only to their own people. And, lastly, because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons chiefly I will rather, God being my helper, stand quite alone, than join with them: I mean, till I have full assurance that they will spread none of these errors among the little flock committed to my charge.

“O! my brother, my soul is grieved for you: The poison is in you: Fair words have stolen away your heart. ‘No

‘English man or woman is like the Moravians!’ So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together, a few months since; but two are gone to the right hand, (Hutchins and Cennick,) and two more to the left, (Mr. Hall and you.) Lord, if it be thy Gospel which I preach, arise and maintain thine own cause!”—It was well for the Reformation, that Melancthon had Luther with him, to correct the softness of his spirit.

Mr. Maxfield was now regularly employed in the work. He was remarkably useful, and excited the astonishment of those who heard him. The late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon was, at this time and for many years after, exceedingly attached to Mr. Wesley, and very frequently wrote to him. She heard Mr. Maxfield expound, and, in a letter to Mr. Wesley, speaks thus of him: “I never mentioned to you, that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God’s peculiar favour that I know. He has raised from the stones, one to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. How is God’s power shewn in weakness! You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favoured of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him, and thought what a power of God must be with him, to make me give any attention to him. But before he had gone over one-fifth part, any one that had seen me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him.—The society goes on well here. Live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus.”

Mr. Wesley’s letter to his brother Charles, seems to have thoroughly roused him. Accordingly on August 16th, having shaken off his depression, he entered fully on the Itinerant

plan. He rode to Wickham, and being denied the church, would have preached in a private house; but Mr. Bowers having been there preaching in the streets, had raised great opposition, and effectually shut the door against him. The next day he went to Oxford, and the day following reached Evesham. After being here two or three days, he wrote to his brother as follows.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ We left the brethren at Oxford much edified, and two gowns-men thoroughly awakened. On Saturday afternoon God brought us hither : Mr. Seward being from home, there was no admission for us, his wife being an opposer, and having refused to see Mr. Whitefield before me. At seven in the evening Mr. Seward found us at the inn, and took us home. At eight I expounded in the school-room, which holds about two hundred persons. On Sunday morning I preached from George Whitefield’s pulpit, *the wall*, on ‘ *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.*’ The notice being short, we had only a few hundreds, but such as those described in the Morning Lesson, ‘ *These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind.*’ In the evening I shewed, to near two thousand hearers, their Saviour in the good Samaritan. Once more God strengthened me at nine, to open the new Covenant, at the school-house, which was crowded with deeply attentive sinners.”

He goes on. “ August 20th, I spoke from Acts ii, 37, to two or three hundred market people, and soldiers, all as orderly and decent as could be desired. I now heard, that the mayor had come down on Sunday, to take a view of us. Soon after, an officer struck a countryman in the face without any provocation. A serious woman besought the poor man, not to resist evil, as the other only wanted to make a riot.

He took patiently several repeated blows, telling the officer, he might beat him as long as he pleased.\*

“ To-day Mr. Seward’s cousin told us of a young lady, who was here on a visit, and had been deeply affected on Sunday night under the word, seeing and feeling her need of the Physician, and earnestly desired me to pray for her. After dinner I spoke with her. She burst into tears, and told us she had come hither thoughtless, dead in pleasures and sin, and fully resolved against ever being a Methodist: That she was first alarmed about her own state, by seeing us so happy and full of love; had gone to the Society, but was not thoroughly awakened to a knowledge of herself, till the word came home to her soul: That, all the following night, she had been in an agony of distress; could not pray, could not bear our singing, nor have any rest in her spirit. We betook ourselves to prayer for her; she received forgiveness and triumphed in the Lord her God.

“ August 23d. By ten last night, we reached Gloucester, through many dangers and difficulties. In mounting my horse I fell over him, and sprained my hand; riding in the dark I bruised my foot; we lost our way as often as we could; there were only two horses between three of us: When we had got to Gloucester, we were turned back from a friend’s house, on account of his wife’s sickness; and my voice and strength were quite gone. To-day they are in some measure restored. At night I with difficulty got into the crowded Society, where I preached the Law and the Gospel, which they received with all readiness. Three clergymen were present. Some without attempted to make a disturbance, but in vain.

“ August 25th. Before I went into the streets and highways, I sent, according to my custom, to borrow the use of the church. The minister, being one of the better disposed, sent back a civil message; ‘ that he would be glad to drink a

\* This was very wrong, he ought to suffer patiently, but not to encourage the evil.

‘glass of wine with me, but durst not lend his pulpit for fifty ‘guineas.’ Mr. Whitefield,\* however, durst lend me his field, which did just as well. For near an hour and a half, God gave me voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners, to repent and believe the Gospel. Being invited to Painswick, I waited upon the Lord, and renewed my strength. We found near a thousand persons gathered in the street. I discoursed from, ‘*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*’ I besought them earnestly to be reconciled, and the rebels seemed inclined to lay down their arms. A young Presbyterian teacher cleaved to us.”

On returning to Gloucester, Mr. C. Wesley received an invitation from F. Drummond; he dined with her, and several of the friends; particularly he mentions—“Josiah Martin, a spiritual man,” says he, “as far as I can discern. My heart was enlarged, and knit to them in love.” Going in the evening, to preach in the field, Mrs. Kirkman, an old and intimate acquaintance, whose son had been with him and his brother at Oxford, put herself in his way; and addressed him, with, “What, Mr. Wesley, is it you I see? Is it possible that you, who can preach at Christ-Church, St. Mary’s, &c. should come hither after a mob!” He gave her a short answer, and went to his mob; or to put it in the phrase of the Pharisees, to ‘*this people who know not the law and are accursed.*’ Thousands heard him gladly, while he explained the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, and exhorted all to come to Christ as lost sinners, that they might enjoy them. The more ignorant and wicked the common people were at this time, the greater were the charity and kindness of those, who, in the face of all dangers, endeavoured to instruct them in their duty to God and man, and by this means reform their manners.

At this period, the education of the labouring poor was

\* Brother of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield.

almost wholly neglected. The public discourses of the regular clergy had no influence upon this class of people. Many of them never went to church, and most of those who did, neither understood, nor felt themselves interested, in what the preachers delivered from the pulpit. "*Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people.*" Nor was there any prospect of doing them good, except by some extraordinary method of proceeding, as their ignorance and vicious habits placed them beyond the reach of any salutary influence from the ordinary means of improvement appointed by the government.

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Viewing *Itinerant* preaching in this light, we see its importance, and must acknowledge that the authors of it deserve great praise; especially as they introduced it by their own example, under great difficulties and hardships. Their prospects in life, from their learning, their abilities, and their rank in Society, were all sacrificed to the plan of Itinerancy. They had every thing to lose by it; reputation, health, and the esteem of their friends; and nothing in this world to gain, but great bodily fatigue, ill usage from the mob, and general contempt: And as only three persons united together at first in the plan, they could not expect to form any extensive or permanent establishment. It is very evident from their writings, that these three servants of God did not look forward to any distant consequences of their proceedings: They contented themselves with doing as much good as possible in the way which opened before them; and they truly laboured also for their own continuance in the faith, knowing that unfaithfulness to their calling would impair, and in the issue destroy it."

Mr. C. Wesley pursued his plan, and on the 26th of August, 1739, was at Painswick. The Minister was so obliging as to lend him his pulpit. But the church would not hold the people; it was supposed there were two thousand persons in the church-yard. He therefore stood at a window, which was

taken down, and preached to the congregation within the walls, and without. They listened with eager attention, while he explained, “*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,*” &c.

“In the afternoon,” says he, “I preached again to a Kennington congregation. It was the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. The people filled the gradually rising area, which was shut up on three sides by a vast hill. On the top and bottom of this hill, was a great row of trees. In this Amphitheatre the people stood deeply attentive, while I called upon them in Christ’s words, ‘*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*’ The tears of many testified, that they were ready to enter into that rest. It was with difficulty we made our way through this most loving people, and returned amidst their prayers and blessings to Ebly, where I expounded the Second Lesson for two hours.”

A good old Baptist had invited Mr. C. Wesley to preach at Stanley, in his way to Bristol. Accordingly, on the 27th, he rode thither through the rain, and preached to about a thousand attentive hearers: They were so much affected by the sermon, that he appointed them to meet him again in the evening. We see with pleasure, that many persons among the various denominations of Dissenters shewed a friendly disposition, and countenanced his proceedings. They discovered a stronger attachment to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, than to the peculiarities of their several opinions and modes of worship. The Dissenters in general, however, kept at a distance, being afraid for the Dissenting interest.

Mr. C. Wesley arrived in Bristol August 28th; and his brother having set out for London, on the 31st he entered on his ministry at Weaver’s Hall. “I began,” says he, “by expounding Isaiah with great freedom. They were melted into tears all around, and again when the bands met to keep the Church-fast. We were all of one heart and of one mind.

I forgot the contradiction wherewith they grieved my soul in London, and could not forbear saying, ‘*It is good for me to be here.*’”

September 4th, He preached again at Kingswood to some thousands, colliers chiefly, and held out the promises from Isaiah xxxv: “*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.*” He adds, “I triumphed in the mercy of God to these poor outcasts, (for ‘*he hath called them a people who were not a people,*’) and in the accomplishment of that Scripture, ‘*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*’ How gladly do the poor receive the Gospel! We hardly knew how to part.”

September 5th, Mr. C. Wesley says, “I was much discouraged by a discovery of the disorderly walking of some, who have given the adversary occasion to blaspheme. I am a poor creature upon such occasions, being soon cast down. Yet I went and talked to them, and God filled me with such love to their souls, as I have not known before. They could not stand before it. Some trembled exceedingly; the others gave us great cause to hope for them.”

September 11th, He rode with two friends to Bradford, near Bath, and preached to about a thousand persons, who seemed deeply affected. On the 15th he says, “Having been provoked to speak unadvisedly with my lips, I preached on the Bowling-Green in great weakness,\* on ‘*Lazarus, come forth!*’ I was surprised that any good should be done. But God quickens others by those who are dead themselves.

\* Men in general would think, that where there was so much boldness, there would be little tenderness of conscience. We see the contrary. Indeed, tenderness of conscience was at the bottom of the whole work. They feared to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by giving way to the fear of man.



A man came to me and declared he had now received the Spirit of life; and so did a woman at the same time, which she openly declared at Weaver's Hall. We had great power among us while I displayed the believer's privileges from the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.—On the 16th, I met between thirty and forty colliers, with their wives, at Mr. Willis's, and administered the sacrament to them; but found no comfort myself, in that or any other ordinance. I always find strength for the work of the ministry; but when my work is over, my bodily and spiritual strength both leave me. I can pray for others, not for myself. God, by me, strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees; yet am I as a man in whom is no strength. I am weary and faint in my mind, continually longing to be discharged.”—Soon after, however, he found power to pray for himself, and confessed it was good for him to be in desertion. He was greatly strengthened and comforted, by opening his Bible on Isaiah liv, 7, 8: “*For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*” He saw the rod, and submitted to the correction.

The Lord encouraged him also by Sarah Pearce declaring, that “she first received comfort on hearing me explain the fifth chapter of the Romans. She had the witness of her own spirit, that all the marks I mentioned were upon her; and the Spirit of God, with his testimony, put it beyond the possibility of a doubt. Some of her words were—‘I was extremely ‘bigotted against my brethren the Dissenters, but am now ‘enlarged towards them and all mankind, in an inexpressible ‘manner. I do not depend upon a start of comfort, but find ‘it increase ever since it began. I perceive a great change in ‘myself, and expect a greater. I feel a divine attraction in ‘my soul to heavenly things. I was once so afraid of death,

‘that I durst not sleep, but now I do not fear it at all. I desire nothing on earth: I fear nothing but sin. God suffers me to be strongly tempted; but I know, where he gives faith he will try it.’—See here the true assurance of faith! How consistent! An humble, not doubting, faith: A filial, not servile, fear of offending. I desire not *such* an assurance as blots out these Scriptures, ‘*Be not high-minded, but fear: Work out your salvation with fear and trembling,*’ &c. God keep me in constant fear, lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

“I spoke plainly to the women-bands of their unadvisedness, their want of love, and not bearing one another’s burdens. We found an immediate effect. Some were convinced they had thought too highly of themselves; and that their first love, like their first joy, was only a foretaste of that temper which continually rules in a new heart.”—They had not been attentive to that command, “*Go on to perfection.*”

Though there had been no riots, nor any open persecution of the Methodists in Bristol, yet many individuals suffered considerably. “Every Sunday,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “damnation is denounced by some of the Clergy against all who hear us; for we are Papists, Jesuits, seducers, and bringers-in of the Pretender. The Clergy murmur aloud at the number of communicants, and threaten to repel them. Yet will not the world bear, that we should talk of persecution: No; for the world now is *Christian*!, and the offence of the cross has ceased. Alas! what would they do further? Some lose their bread; some, their habitations: One suffers stripes, another confinement; yet we must not call this persecution! Doubtless, they will find some other name for it, when they shall think they do God service by killing us. It is always the lamb that troubles the water.”

October 8th, Mr. C. Wesley preached at the Brick-yard. A Mr. Williams, from Kidderminster, who had written to

him some time before to go down thither, was present, and much edified and strengthened by the sermon. "I know not," says Mr. C. Wesley, "of what denomination he is, nor is it material; for he has the mind which was in Christ."

Mr. C. Wesley's sermon, when last at Bradford, had been misunderstood or misrepresented.. It was reported, that he was a high Calvinist, and great pains had been taken to represent him as such. His brother, Mr. John Wesley, coming to Bristol this evening, it was the opinion of both, that he ought to preach again at Bradford, and declare his sentiments openly on this point. The next day, October the 9th, they went to Bradford, where Mr. Charles Wesley preached to a congregation of about two thousand people. Mr. John Wesley prayed first, when Mr. Charles began abruptly, "*If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for US ALL, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*" He spake with great boldness and freedom for an hour and a half, holding forth Christ a Saviour for all men. He flattered himself that he had done so much injury to Satan's kingdom, by beating down sin, that he says, "I believe he will no more slander me with being a Predestinarian."

"October 15th, I waited, with my brother, on a Minister about baptizing some of his parishioners. He complained heavily of the multitudes of our communicants, who came to his church, and produced the Canon against *strangers*. He could not admit as a reason for their coming to his church, that they had no Sacrament at their own. I offered my assistance to lessen his trouble, but he declined it. He told us, there were hundreds of new communicants last Sunday. We bless God for *this cause* of offence, and pray it may never be removed.

"October 19th, I read part of Mr. Law on Regeneration to our Society. How promising the beginning, and how lame the conclusion! Christianity, he rightly tells us, is a

recovery of the Divine image; and a Christian is a fallen spirit restored and re-instated in paradise; a living mirror of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. After this, he supposes it *possible* for him to be insensible of such a change; to be happy and holy, translated into Eden, renewed in the likeness of God, and *not to know it*. Nay, we are not to expect, nor bid others expect, any such consciousness, if we listen to him. What wretched inconsistency!"—If a man knows it not, how can he manifest the *fruits* of such a renewal?

When Mr. Wesley baptized adults, professing faith in Christ, he chose to do it by trine immersion, if the persons would submit to it, judging this to be the Apostolic method of baptizing.\* October 25th, he says, "I baptized Mr. Wiggington in the river, by Baptist-Mills, and went on my way rejoicing to French-Hay.—October 27th, I took occasion to shew the degeneracy of our modern Pharisees. Their predecessors fasted twice a week; but they maintain their character for holiness at a cheaper rate. In reverence for the Church, some keep their public day on Friday: None regard it, though enjoined as a Fast. Their neglect is equally notorious in regard to prayer and the Sacrament. And yet these men cry out, 'THE CHURCH, THE CHURCH!,' when they themselves will not hear the Church, but despise her authority, trample upon her orders, teach contrary to her Articles and Homilies, and break her Canons, even every man of those who of late pretend to enforce their observance.

"October 13th, I wrote to the Bishop of Bristol as follows:

"MY LORD,

"Several persons have applied to me for Baptism.† It has pleased God to make me instrumental in their conver-

\* The Apostolic mode varied, according to circumstances. This is clear from the Acts of the Apostles.

† He mentioned the names of seven persons.

sion. This has given them such a prejudice for me, that they desire to be received into the Church by my ministry. They choose likewise to be baptized by immersion, and have engaged me to give your Lordship notice, as the Church requires."

"November 2d, I received a summons from Oxford, to *respond* in Divinity Disputations; which, together with other concurrent providences, is a plain call to that place."—His brother met him there. They left Oxford on the 15th of November, and, taking Bristol in their way, they arrived at Tiverton on the 21st, a few days after the funeral of their brother Samuel. Having preached at Exeter during their short stay in these parts, they returned to Bristol on the 28th of the same month.

March 14th, 1740, Mr. C. Wesley visited Gloucester, in company with Thomas Maxfield, who travelled with him most part of this year. The next day he went to Bengeworth, in hopes of seeing his old friend, Mr. Benjamin Seward. But here he met with a disappointment. Mr. Seward had been ill of a fever. His relations, taking advantage of his situation, had intercepted all his letters: They called his fever madness; and now, when he was recovering, placed his servants over him, to prevent any Methodist from coming to him. His brother, Mr. Henry Seward, came to Mr. C. Wesley, and gave him plenty of abuse, calling him scoundrel, rascal, pick-pocket, &c. Mr. Wesley made little reply, but ordered notice to be given, that he would preach next day, March 16th, at the usual place, which was near Mr. Seward's house. The brother came to him, to dissuade him from attempting it, telling him that four constables were ordered to apprehend him, if he came near his brother's wall. Mr. C. Wesley, however, was not to be deterred from his purpose by such threatenings; and, when the time of preaching drew near, walked forward towards the place. In his way thither, a Mayor's officer met him, and desired he would go with him to the Mayor. Mr.

C. Wesley answered, that he would first wait on his Lord, and then on the Mayor, whom he revered for the sake of his office. Mr. H. Seward now met him with threatenings and revilings. Mr. C. Wesley began singing, " Shall I for fear of feeble man," &c. This enraged Mr. Henry, who ran about raving like a madman, and quickly got some fellows fit for his purpose. These laid hold on Mr. C. Wesley, who asked, by what authority they did it? Where was their warrant? Let them shew that, and he would save them the trouble of using violence.—They said they had no warrant, but he should not preach there; and dragged him away amidst the cries of the people. Mr. Henry Seward cried out, " Take him away, and duck him !" " I broke out," says Mr. C. Wesley, " into singing, with Thomas Maxfield, and suffered them to carry me whither they pleased. At the bridge in the lane they left me. Then I stood out of the Liberty of the Corporation, and gave out,

Angel of God, whate'er betide,  
Thy summons I obey ! &c.

Some hundreds followed, whom they could not hinder from hearing me, on, *' If God be for us, who can be against us ?'* Never did I feel so much what I spoke, and the word did not return empty.

" I then waited on Mr. Mayor, the poor sincere ones following me trembling. He was a little warm at my not coming before. I gave him the reason, and added, that I knew of no law of God or man which I had transgressed; but, if there was any such law, I desired no favour. He said, he should not have denied me leave to preach, even in his own yard; but Mr. H. Seward and the apothecary had assured him, it would quite cast his brother down again. I answered, it would tend to restore him. Here a clergyman spoke much—and nothing. As far as I could pick out his meaning, he grumbled that Mr. Whitefield had spoken against the clergy

in his Journal. I told him, if he were a carnal worldly-minded clergyman, I also might do what he would call railing, I might warn God's people to *beware of false prophets*. I did not say, because I did not know, that he was one of those shepherds who fed themselves, not the flock; but if he was, I was sorry for him, and must leave that sentence of Chrysostom with him, 'Hell is paved with the skulls of Christian Priests.' I turned from him, and asked the Mayor, whether he approved of the treatment I had met with? He said, By no means; and if I complained, he would bind the men over to answer it at the sessions. I told him, I did not complain, neither would I prosecute them, as they well knew. I assured him, that I waited on him, not from interest, for I wanted nothing; not from fear, for I had done no wrong; but from true respect, and to shew him that I believed, '*the powers that be are ordained of God.*'"

March 17th, Mr. C. Wesley preached again, when a troop poured in upon him and the quiet congregation, and made much disturbance. "I enjoyed," says he, "a sweet calm within, even while I preached the Gospel with much contention. These slighter conflicts must fit me for greater."—The next day, before preaching, he received a message from the minister, informing him, that, if he did not immediately quit the town, Mr. H. Seward could easily raise a mob, and then he must look to himself. Mr. Canning, and others of his friends, dissuaded him from going to the Society; for his enemies were determined to do him a mischief, which they thought he should avoid, by going out of the way for awhile. But Mr. C. Wesley was not intimidated by threatenings. He adds, "I went and set upon the opposers. I bid them to rejoice and glory, for now they had terrified me; I was really afraid to leave Evesham: I durst no more do it, than forsake my Captain, or deny my Master, while any one of them opened his mouth against the truth. No man answered a word, or offered to disturb me in my following exhortation.

I received great comfort from those words in the first Lesson, ‘ *Then the men of the city said unto Joash, bring out thy son, that he may die, because he hath cast down the altar of Baal. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? If he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.*’ In the afternoon, there was none to plead for him, or to molest me in the work of God, while I shewed God’s method of saving souls: ‘ *For he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth and his hand maketh whole.*’ The tears that were shed gave comfortable evidence that I had not laboured in vain.”

Mr. C. Wesley went from hence to Westcot, Idbury, and Oxford, where he laboured with his usual success. He then returned to Evesham, saw his friend Mr. Benjamin Seward, and preached without molestation.—April 3d, he arrived in London, and preached at the Foundery, on, “ *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*” He observes, “ My heart was enlarged in prayer for the Infant Society.”

May 2d, Mr. C. Wesley received the following letter:

“ My Reverend Father in Christ,

“ I first received the gift of faith after I had seen myself a lost sinner, bound with a thousand chains, and dropping into hell. Then I heard his voice, ‘ *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*’ I saw the Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me. I thought I saw him at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for me. I went on in great joy for four months. Then pride crept in, and I thought the work was finished, when it was but just begun. There I rested, and, in a little time, fell into doubts and fears, whether my sins were really forgiven me, till I plunged myself into the depth of misery. I could not pray, neither had I any desire to do it, or to read the Word. Then did I see my own evil heart, and feel my helplessness, so that I could not so



much as think a good thought. My love was turned into hatred, passion, envy, &c. I felt a thousand hells my due, and cried out in bitter anguish of spirit, ‘*Save, Lord, or I perish.*’ In my last extremity, I saw my Saviour full of grace and truth for me, and heard his voice again, whispering, ‘*Peace, be still.*’ My peace returned, and greater sweetness of love than I ever knew before. Now my joy is calm and solid,—my heart drawn out to the Lord continually. I know that my Redeemer liveth for me: He is my strength and my rock, and will carry on his work in my soul to the day of redemption. Dear Sir, I have spoken the state of my heart as before the Lord. I beg your prayers, that I may go on from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer, till death is swallowed up in victory.

“ G. MURRAY ”

I shall have occasion to note this letter, and the writer of it, hereafter.

May 8th, Howell Harris being in town, Mr. C. Wesley observes: “ He declared his experience before the Society. O what a flame was kindled ! No man speaks in my hearing as this man speaketh. What a nursing-father God has sent us ! He has, indeed, learned of the good Shepherd to carry the lambs in his bosom. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible.” At this meeting, Howell Harris invited all lost sinners, justified, or not justified, to the Lord’s Table. “ I would not,” said he, “ for ten thousand worlds, be the man who should keep any from it. There I first found him myself: That is the place of meeting.” “ He went on,” adds Mr. Wesley, “ in the power of the Most High. God called forth his witnesses: Several declared they had *found* Christ in the ordinances.”—The doctrine newly broached was, that no person had a right to come who was not *justified*: A Pharisaic and mischievous refinement ! Not one of those to whom our Lord administered it, was justified in the *Christian* sense of that word. To be “ *justified by his blood,*” (Romans

v, 9,) was one of *those things of God*, which our Lord told them “*they were not yet able to bear*,” (John xvi, 12—14.) They could only be taught it by the Holy Ghost, who thus “*glorified the Son*.”

June 17th, Mr. Wesley says, “We had an extraordinary meeting of the Society, increased from eighteen to three hundred. I took my leave of them with hearty prayer.” The next day he set out for Bristol, where he arrived on the 21st, having called at Oxford in his way thither. “My first greeting at Kingswood,” says he, “was by a daughter of one of our colliers. In the evening was at the Malt-Room, and addressed myself to those in the wilderness. O what simplicity is in this child-like people! A spirit of contrition and love ran through them. Here the seed has fallen upon good ground.

“Sunday, June 22d, I went [again] to learn Christ among our colliers, and drank into their spirit. We rejoiced for the consolation. O that some of our London brethren would but come to school to Kingswood! These *are* what they of London *pretend* to be. God knows their poverty; but they are rich, and daily entering into his rest. They do not hold it necessary to deny weak faith, in order to get strong. Their souls truly wait upon God, in his ordinances. Ye many masters, come learn Christ of these outcasts; for know, that *except ye be converted, and become like these little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*. I met several of those whom I had baptized, and found them growing in grace.

“June 30. I now spent a week at Oxford to little purpose, but that of obedience to man, for the Lord’s sake. In the Hall, I read my two Lectures on the cxxxth Psalm, preaching repentance towards God and faith in Christ Jesus. But learned Gallio cared for none of these things.”

July 16th.—Being returned to Bristol, he observes, “While I was meeting the Bands, my mouth was opened to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, in words not my own. All trembled before the presence of God. I was forced to cut off a rotten

member ; but felt such love and pity at the time, as humbled me into the dust. It was, as if one criminal was executing another. We betook ourselves to fervent prayer for him, and the Society. The spirit of prayer was poured out upon us, and we returned to the Lord, with weeping and mourning.”—See here the true *Apostolical* Spirit of Church Discipline.

Many of the Colliers, who had been abandoned to every kind of wickedness, even to a proverb, were now become pious, and zealous for the things of God. A great number of these, at this time, came to the churches in Bristol on the Lord’s-day, for the benefit of the sacrament. But most of the Bristol ministers repelled them from the table, because they did not belong to their parishes. Setting religion aside, common humanity would have taught them to rejoice in so remarkable a reformation among these wretched people. But these watchmen of Israel did not choose to have any increase of trouble. Can we wonder, that the Methodists had such great success in preaching the gospel to the middling and lower orders of the people, when such as these had in that day the care of most of the parishes in England ? The case is now, thank God, greatly altered.

“ July 27.—I heard a miserable sermon,” says Mr. C. Wesley, “ at Temple Church, recommending religion as the most likely way to raise a fortune. After sermon, proclamation was made, that all should depart who were not of the parish. While the shepherd was driving away the lambs, I staid, suspecting nothing, till the clerk came to me and said, ‘ Mr. Beacher bids you go away, for he will not give you ‘ the sacrament.’ I went to the vestry-door, and mildly desired Mr. Beacher to admit me. He asked, ‘ Are you of this ‘ parish ?’ I answered, Sir, you see that I am a clergyman. Then dropping his first pretence, he charged me with rebellion, in expounding the scripture without authority ; and said in express words, ‘ I repel you from the sacrament.’ I replied,

I cite you to answer this, before JESUS CHRIST, at the day of judgment. This enraged him above measure ; he called out, ‘ *Here, take away this man.*’ The constables had been ordered to attend, I suppose, lest the colliers should take the sacrament by force ! but I saved them the trouble of taking away ‘ *this man,*’ and quietly retired.”—These things are but poor evidences, that the Bristol ministers were at that time the true successors of the apostles !

In August Mr. C. Wesley had a very dangerous fever. It was reported, and published in the papers, that he was dead. Upon his recovery, he observes, “ I found myself after this gracious visitation, more desirous and able to pray ; more afraid of sin ; more earnestly longing for deliverance, and the fulness of Christian salvation.”—Soon afterwards two or three of the Society died, in the triumph of faith, and full assurance of hope ; which strengthened the hands and comforted the hearts of those who were left behind.

September 22d, Mr. C. Wesley was informed that the colliers had risen ;\* and riding out from Bristol, he met about a thousand of them at Lawrence-Hill. The occasion of their rising was, the dearness of corn. He went up to an eminence, and began to talk to them. Many seemed inclined to go back with him to the school, which some of the most desperate perceiving, they rushed violently upon the others, beating, tearing, and driving them every way from Mr. C. Wesley. He adds, “ I rode up to a ruffian, who was striking one of our colliers,† and prayed him rather to strike me. He answered, ‘ No, not for all the world,’ and was quite overcome. I turned upon another, who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. Wherever I turned, Satan’s cause lost ground, so that they were obliged to make one general assault, and the violent colliers forced the quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest, and earnestly besought him to follow me : ‘ Yes,’

\* A common thing in that day among that lawless people.

† He means a collier, who was in the Methodist Society.

he said, ‘ that he would, all the world over.’ I pressed about six into Christ’s service. We met several parties, and stopped and exhorted them to follow us: and gleaning some from every company, we increased as we marched on, singing to the school. From one till three o’clock, we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented, and the lion chained. Then news was brought us, that the colliers were returned in peace. They had walked quietly into the city, without sticks or the least violence. A few of the better sort of them went to the mayor, and told their grievance; then they all returned as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw it were amazed. Nothing could more clearly have shewn the change wrought among them, than *this conduct on such an occasion*.

“ I found afterwards, that all our colliers, to a man, had been forced away. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they *went a mile* with those who compelled them,\* rather than free themselves by violence. One man the rioters dragged out of his sick bed, and threw him into the Fish Ponds. Near twenty of Mr. Willis’s men they had prevailed on, by threatening to fill up their pits, and bury them alive, if they did not come up and bear them company.”†

November 6th.—He set out for Wales. Here, vain disputings and janglings about absolute predestination, had done much harm in several societies; even Howell Harris, embracing this doctrine, had been greatly estranged from his friend. Any doctrine comes poorly recommended to us, when it almost uniformly diminishes Christian love and friendship. That the diminution of Christian love was on the part of H. Harris, is evident from the following letter, which Mr. Wesley sent him from Cardiff, on the 10th of November.

\* Matthew v. 41.

† This was a common practice among these ungodly men. At those risings, they suffered none to stay at home. Whether they would act or not, they must go with them.

“ MY DEAREST FRIEND AND BROTHER,

“ In the name of Jesus Christ, I beseech you, if you have his glory and the good of souls at heart, to come immediately to meet me here. I trust we shall never be *two*, in time or eternity. O! my brother, I am grieved that Satan should get a moment’s advantage over us; and am ready to lay my neck under your feet for Christ’s sake. If your heart be as my heart, hasten, in the name of our dear Lord, to your second self.”—This letter shews a mind susceptible of the strongest attachments of friendship, and does Mr. C. Wesley great honour. Howell Harris, however, did not come to him till the 18th, when he was at Lantrissant, and preparing to leave Wales. Mr. C. Wesley adds, “ All misunderstanding vanished at the sight of each other, and our hearts were knit together as at the beginning. Before the society met, several persons were with me, desiring that as I had now got him, I would reprove him openly. Some wanted me to preach against lay-preaching; some against predestination, &c. In my discourse, a gentleman, who had come thither on purpose, interrupted me by desiring I would now speak to Mr. Harris, since I was sent for to disprove his errors. I quashed all further importunity by declaring, ‘ I am unwilling ‘ to speak of my brother Harris, because when I begin, I know ‘ not where to leave off, and should say so much good of him, ‘ as some of you could not bear.’ ”

During the sermon on the following Sunday, while Mr. C. Wesley was describing the state of the Pharisee, a physician of the place found himself hurt, and got up and walked out of the church. On the Tuesday following, being unusually heated with wine, and urged on by a company of players determined on mischief, he came to the house where the people were assembled, to demand satisfaction for the injury he supposed that he had received. He struck Mr. C. Wesley and several of the women with his cane, and raged like a madman, till the men forced him out of the room, and shut

the door. Soon after, it was broken open by a justice of the peace, and the bailiff, or head magistrate. "The latter began expostulating with me," says Mr. Wesley, "upon the affront offered the Doctor. He said, as it was a public injury, I ought to make him a public satisfaction. I answered, Mr. Bailiff, I honour you for your office sake; but were you, or his Majesty King George among my hearers, I should tell you both, that you are by nature sinners, *or, children of wrath, even as others*. In the church while preaching, I have no superior but God, and shall not ask man leave to tell him of his sins. As a ruler, it is your duty to be "*a terror to evil-doers, but a praise to them that do well.*" Upon thus speaking to him, he became exceedingly civil, assured me of his good-will, and that he had come to prevent me from being insulted, and no one should touch a hair of my head.

"While we were talking, the Doctor made another attempt to break in and get at me, but the two justices and others, with much trouble, got him away; and we continued our triumph in the name of the Lord our God. *The shout of a King was among us*. We sang unconcerned, though the players had beset the house, were armed, and threatened to burn it. The ground of their quarrel with me was, that the preaching of the Gospel had starved them. We prayed and sang with great tranquillity till one in the morning; then I lay down till three. I rose again, and was scarcely got into the room, [where he was to preach at five,] when they discovered a player just by me, who had stolen in unobserved. They seized him, and F. Farley wrested a sword from him. There was no need of drawing it, for the point and blade were stript of the scabbard, about an hand's breadth. Great was our rejoicing within, and the uproar of the players without. My female advisers were by no means for my venturing out, but wished me to defer my journey. I preferred Mr. Wells's advice, of going with him through the midst of our enemies. We called on the poor creature they had secured.

On sight of me he cried out, ‘ Indeed, Mr. Wesley, I did ‘ not intend to do you any harm.’ That, I answered, was best known to God and his own heart ; but I told him that my principle was to return good for evil, and therefore desired he might be released ; and with Mr. Wells walked down to the water-side, no man forbidding me.”—The next day, November the 20th, he arrived safe in Bristol.

He goes on. “ November 30th, I gave the sacrament to our sister Taylor, dying in triumph. Here is another witness to the truth of the Gospel we preach. Commend me to a religion, upon which I can trust my soul, while entering into eternity.

“ December 2d, I preached on the three-fold office of Christ, at Kingswood, and never with greater power. It constrained even the Separatists (the Calvinists) to own, that God was with us of a truth. I rode back in a glorious storm of thunder, lightning and rain ; my spirit rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. He opened my mouth again in the Society, and I spoke in much grief, of our desolate mother, the Church of England. My heart yearns towards her, when I think upon her ruins ; and it pitieth me to see her in the dust.

“ December 5th, I was much refreshed in spirit among some of my friends the Quakers, by a writer of theirs, who strongly insists on the perfect death unto sin, and life unto righteousness, which every Christian experiences. Death must precede life, and condemnation, justification. This he as clearly teaches as any of our first Reformers.”

December 24th, Mr. C. Wesley set out, with Thos. Maxfield, for London, where they arrived the next day. On the 27th, he says, “ Six or seven hundred of us met from eleven o’clock till one, to praise God with the voice of joy and thanksgiving. He hath done great things for us already ; but we shall see greater things than these —I dined at the house of a Dissenter, who was armed cap-a-pee with her faith of adherence, brim-



full of the Five Points, and going on to the perfection described in Romans the Seventh! On the 28th, I earnestly warned the Bands not to fancy they had new hearts before they had seen the deceitfulness of the old; not to think they would ever be above the necessity of prayer; not to yield for one moment to the spirit of judging. Mr. Aspernal told me strange things, and I fear true, of some new creatures *of their own making*, who have been caught in gross lies.”

April 4th, 1741. Mr. C. Wesley set out for Bristol, and arrived there in safety the next day.—April 7th, he says, “I prayed by one, supposed to be at the point of death. He rejoiced to meet the king of terrors; and appeared so sweetly resigned, so ready for the Bridegroom, that I longed to change places with him.—April 11th, Found a dying sinner rejoicing in God her Saviour. At sight of me, she cried out, ‘O how loving is God to me! But he is loving to every man; he loves every soul as well \* as he loves mine.’ Many like words she uttered in triumphant faith, and witnessed in death the universal love of Jesus Christ.—April 12th, To-day he called forth another of his dying witnesses. The young woman, whom, at my last visit, I left in utter despair, this morning broke out into the following expressions; ‘I see, I see it now, that Jesus Christ died for me; and for all the world.’ Some of her words to me were, ‘Death stares me in the face, but I fear him not, he cannot hurt me.’ And again, ‘Death may shake his dart in vain; God is love, pure love, love to every man!’ The next I saw, was our brother S——.

With joyful eyes, and looks Divine,  
Smiling and pleas’d in death.

April 13th, I gave the sacrament to the Bands of Kingswood, not of Bristol; in obedience, as I told them, to the Church of England, which requires a weekly sacrament at every Cathe-

\* Not so well; but as really. The Lord certainly loves *believers* as he does not love those who *will not have him to rule over them*.

dral. But as they had it not there, and as, on this particular Sunday, they were refused it, at Temple-Church, (I myself, with many of them, having been repelled,) I therefore administered it to them in our school; and had we wanted a house, would justify doing it in the midst of the wood. I strongly urged the duty of receiving it, as often as they could be admitted to the Churches. Such a sacrament, I never was present at before. We received the sure pledges of our Saviour's dying love; and were filled with all joy and peace in believing."—This, it seems, was the beginning of the practice of administering the sacrament at Kingswood: But only by Clergymen.

"April 20th, Returning from Baptist-Mills, I heard that our sister Richardson had finished her course.† My soul was filled with strong consolation, and struggled, as it were, to go out after her, as heaven-ward endeavouring. Jesu, my time is in thy hand: Only let me follow her, as she has followed Thee! The voice of joy and thanksgiving was in the congregation, while I spake of her death.

"April 22d.—I hastened to the joyful funeral. The New Room was crowded within and without. I spake largely of her whose faith they might safely follow. Great was my glorying and rejoicing over her. She, being dead, yet spake in words of faith and love, which ought to be had in remembrance. We were, in a measure, partakers of her joy, '*a joy unspeakable and full of glory.*' The whole society followed her to the grave, through all the city. Satan raged exceedingly in his children, who threw dirt and stones at us. After the burial, we joined in the following hymn,

Come let us, who in Christ believe,  
With Saints and Angels join, &c.

"May 1st.—I visited a sister dying in the Lord: Then

† He wrote a fine hymn upon her death.—See the Funeral Hymns.

two others, one mourning after, the other rejoicing in, God her Saviour. I was now informed that another of our sisters, E. Smith, is gone home in triumph. She witnessed a good confession of the universal Saviour, and gave up her spirit with these words ‘ *I go to my heavenly Father !*’

“ May 4.—I rejoiced over our sister Hooper. The outward man decayeth, but the inner man is renewed. For one whole night, she had wrestled with all the powers of darkness ; but having done all, she stood unshaken. From henceforth she was kept in perfect peace, and that wicked one touched her not.—I saw her again in great bodily weakness, but strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. I spoke with her physician, who said he had little hope of her recovery ; ‘ Only,’ added he, ‘ she has no dread upon her spirits, which ‘ is generally the worst symptom. Most people die for fear ‘ of dying ; but I never met with such people as your’s. ‘ They are none of them afraid of death ; but calm, and ‘ patient, and resigned to the last.’—He had said to her, ‘ Madam, be not cast down.’—She answered, smiling, ‘ Sir, I ‘ shall never be cast down.’

“ May 6th.—Found our sister Hooper just at the haven. She expressed, while able to speak, her fulness of confidence and love ; and her desire to be with Christ. At my next visit, I saw her in the last conflict. The angel of death was come, and there were but a few moments between her and a blessed eternity. We poured out our souls to God, for her, her children, ourselves, the church and ministers, and for all mankind. My soul was tenderly affected for her sufferings, but the joy swallowed up the sorrow. How much then did her consolations abound ! The servants of Christ, *comparatively speaking*, suffer nothing. I asked her, whether she was not in great pain ? ‘ Yes,’ she answered, ‘ but in greater ‘ joy. I would not be without either.’—But do you not prefer life or death ?—She replied, ‘ All is alike to me ; let

‘Christ choose, I have no will of my own.’—Her spirit ascended to God, and we kneeled down and gave God thanks from the ground of our heart. Then we had recourse to the book of comfort, and found it written, ‘*Let us therefore labour to enter into that rest:*’ Even so, come, Lord Jesus! and give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

“May 8th.—We solemnized her funeral,\* and rejoiced over her with singing. A great multitude attended her to the grave. There we sang another hymn of triumph. I found myself pressed in spirit to speak to those who contradicted and blasphemed. While I reasoned on death and judgment to come, many trembled; one woman cried out in horrible agony. We returned to the room, and continued our solemn rejoicings, all desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ.”

O how much it is to be lamented, that such a man should ever have preferred *rest*! That he should ever have ceased *going about doing good*.

“May 31st.—Throughout this day, I found my strength increase with my labour. I read, in the Society, my account of Hannah Richardson.† She, being dead, yet spake so powerfully to our hearts, that my voice was lost in the sorrowful sighing of such as be in captivity. To several, God shewed himself the God of consolation; particularly to two young Welshmen, whom his Providence sent hither from Caermarthen. They had heard most dreadful stories of us, *Arminians, Free-willers, Perfectionists, Papists*; which all vanished like smoke, when they came to hear with their own ears. God applied to their hearts the word of his power. I took them to my lodgings, and stocked them with books; then sent them away, recommended to the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men.

\* This was a very early interment; but I suppose the state of the body made it necessary.

† This account was printed. See M: John Wesley's Works, Vol. xiii. page 213.

“ June 16th.—I preached in Kingswood, on the dreadful word, ‘ *SELL ALL,*’ [that is, *Do, and use, all things for God.*] How has the Devil baffled those teachers, who, for fear of setting men upon works, forbear urging this first *universal duty*! If enforcing Christ’s words be to preach works, I hope I shall preach works as long as I live.”

July 11th. Mr. C. Wesley preached five times this day; once at Bristol, twice at Kingswood, again at a place called Sawford, and at Bath. He observes, “ Satan took it ill to be attacked in his head-quarters, that Sodom of our land, Bath. He raged horribly in his children. They went out; and came back again, and mocked, and at last roared, as if each man’s name had been Legion. The sincere were melted into tears, and strong desires of salvation.”—It is pleasing to reflect on the change which has taken place in Bath, since the time of which Mr. C. Wesley is here speaking. God has raised up many faithful witnesses of his truth, both among the Methodists, and other denominations, who have been ornaments to the Christian profession; and at present the Gospel is preached there, without molestation.

July 13th. He set out for Cardiff, and on the 15th rode on with Mr. Wells, Mr. Hodges, and others, to Fonmon-Castle. Mr. C. Wesley adds, “ Mr. Jones, who had sent for me, received me very courteously. He civilly apologized for the first question, which he asked me as a magistrate: ‘ Whether I was a Papist? or, whether I was a member of the ‘Established Church of England?’ He was fully satisfied with my answers; and I found we were cotemporaries at the same college. After dinner he sent to Porthkerry, where, at his desire, Mr. Richards the minister lent me his pulpit. I preached, on ‘ *God so loved the world,*’ &c. Never hath he given me more convincing words. The flock, and their shepherd, were deeply affected. After sermon, Mr. Richards begged my pardon, for having believed the strange reports circulated concerning me. God had now spoken the contrary

to his heart, and to the hearts of his people. I yielded to Mr. Jones's importunity, and agreed to delay my return to Bristol, that I might preach here once more, and spend a night at the Castle."

July 17th. Mr. C. Wesley met Mr. and Mrs. Jones at Mr. Richard's, where he again preached, and in the evening went to the Castle. He adds, "We ate our bread with gladness and singleness of heart, and at seven o'clock I preached to some hundreds in the court-yard. My three brethren, the Rev. Messrs. Richards, Wells, and Hodges, stood in the midst of the people, and kneeled on the ground in prayer, and cried after the Son of David. He breathed into our souls strong desires: O! that he may confirm, increase, and satisfy them. The voice of thanksgiving was heard in this place. Before and after supper, we sang and blessed God with joyful lips. They in the parlour, and kitchen, were continually honouring Him, by offering up praise. I thought it looked like the house of faithful Abraham. The next day, July 18th, I took sweet counsel with Mr. Jones alone. The seed is sown in his heart, and, I trust, will bring forth fruit unto perfection. His wife joined us, and I commended them to the grace of God in earnest prayer, and then went on my way rejoicing."

Mr. C. Wesley now returned to Bristol; and on August the 3d, he preached a funeral-sermon for Mrs. Peacock, who died in the Lord most triumphantly. He observes, "She was always praising God for giving her such patience. All her desires were unto the Lord, and she continued calling upon him, in all the confidence of love, till he received her into his more immediate presence. At the sight of her coffin, my soul was moved within me, and struggled as a bird to break its cage. Some relief I found in tears; but still was so overpowered, that, unless God had abated the vehemence of my desires, I could have had no utterance. The whole

congregation partook with me in the blessedness of mourning."

His feelings were generally very strong. I have seen him thus moved, when preaching to the condemned malefactors in Newgate, a year or two before he died.

"August 6th.—Coming to pray by a poor Welch woman, she began with me, 'Blessed be God that ever I heard you ! ' Jesus, my Jesus, has heard me on a bed of sickness. He is ' in my heart ; He is my strength ; none shall pluck me out of ' his hands. I cannot leave him, and he will not leave me. ' O ! do not let me ask for death, if thou wouldst have me ' live. I know thou canst keep me. If thou wouldst have ' me live, let me live humbly with thee all my days.'—I sat and heard her sing the new song, till even my hard heart was melted. She glorified the Saviour of the world, who would have all men to be saved. ' I know it,' said she, ' he would ' not have one sinner lost. Believe, and he will give you ' all that which he has given me.'—Surely this was the true Gospel of God our Saviour !"

On the 24th of this month Mr. C. Wesley, in company with F. Farley, paid another visit to his friends in Wales, and again in September, staying only a few days each time. Mr. Jones, of Fonmon-Castle, accompanied him in his return from the last visit ; being desirous of seeing the wonderful effects of the Gospel among the wild and ignorant colliers of Kingswood. Thither Mr. C. Wesley took him on the 20th of September, and says, " It was a glorious time at the Society, where God called forth his witnesses. Our guest was filled with consolation, and acknowledged that God was with us of a truth. I met the Bands, and strongly urged them to press towards the mark. I read them a letter full of threatenings to take our house by violence. We laughed our enemies to scorn : Faith saw '*the mountain full of horsemen and chariots of fire.*' Our brother from Wales was compelled to bear his testimony, and declare before all what God had done

for his soul. He warned us to prepare for the storm, which would surely fall upon us, if the work went on. His artless words were greatly blessed to us all; and our hearts were bowed and warmed by the spirit of love, as the heart of one man.

“ September 22d.—Mr. Jones wished to take me to some of his great friends in the city, particularly a counsellor, about the threatened seizure of our school. I feared nothing but trusting to an arm of flesh: Our safety is, to be still. However, at his importunity, I went with him a little way, then turned back, and at last agreed to go with him to Justice C—r, the most forward of our adversaries. He received us courteously. I said, I came to wait upon him in respect to his office, having heard his name mentioned among some who were offended at the good we did to the poor colliers; that I should be sorry to give any just cause of complaint, and was willing to know if any had been made; that many idle reports were spread, as if he should countenance the violence of those who had seized the house of Mr. C—, and now threatened to take away the colliers’ school. He said it would make a good workhouse.—I caught hold of the expression, and replied, It is a workhouse already.—‘ Ay,’ said he, ‘ but ‘ what work is done there?’—I answered, We work the works of God, which man cannot hinder.—‘ But you occasion the ‘ increase of the poor.’—Sir, you are misinformed; the reverse of that is true. None of our Society is chargeable to you; even those who were so before they heard us, are not so now; the men who spent all their wages at the alehouse, now never go there at all, but keep their money to maintain their families, and have to give to those who want.\* Notorious swear-

\* When the weekly subscription of a penny was first proposed to the colliers, they were amazed at the smallness of the sum required. One of them cried out, “ A penny a week! I’ll give twenty shillings.” He had that sum at home, which he knew not what to do with, and wished to give it all. They have learned from the Gospel the right use of money, to the great comfort of themselves and others.



ers have now only the praises of God in their mouths. The good done among them is indisputable; our worst enemies cannot deny it. No one who hears us, continues either to swear or drink. ‘If I thought so,’ he hastily replied (*in eodem luto hæsitants,\**) ‘I would come and hear you myself.’ I desired he would; and said, the grace of God was as sufficient for him as for our colliers, and who knew but he might be converted among us?

“I gave him to understand, that Mr. Jones was in the commission of the peace, who then asked him, on what pretence they had seized Mr. C——’s house? He utterly denied having had any hand in it, and said he should not at all concern himself. ‘For if what you do, you do for gain, you have your reward: If for the sake of God, he will recompense you. I am of Gamaliel’s mind, if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God’—I proceeded, *Ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God: Follow therefore Gamaliel’s advice; Take heed to yourselves, refrain from these men, and let them alone.* He seemed determined so to do, and thus, through the blessing of God, we parted friends.

“In the way home, I admired the Hand which directs all our paths. In the evening, at Bristol, we found, under the word, that there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun. It was a time of sweet refreshment. Just when I had done, my brother came in from London, as if sent on purpose to be comforted together with us.† He exhorted and prayed with the congregation for another half hour. Then we went to our friend Vigor’s; and, for an hour or two longer, our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness, while we praised God with joyful lips.”—Mr. C. Wesley wrote a beautiful Elegy on the death of Mr. Jones. It is printed in his Sacred Poems.

\* As if sticking in the same mud.—TERENCE.

† This exactly accords with Mr. John Wesley’s printed Journal. See his Works, vol. xxviii. page 5.

## CHAPTER IV

PROGRESS OF RELIGION—CURIOUS QUERIES CONCERNING THE  
METHODISTS—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE METHODIST DISCI-  
PLINE—DEATH OF MRS. WESLEY—INTERESTING LETTER,  
ILLUSTRATIVE OF HER CHARACTER.

WHILE Mr. C. Wesley thus laboured, Mr. J. Wesley proceeded northward to Nottingham, where he preached at the market-place to an immense multitude of people. On his return to London, he read over in the way Luther's Comment on the Epistle to the Galatians. He passes a severe sentence on Luther, for decrying *Reason*, right or wrong, as an enemy to the Gospel of Christ; and for speaking *blasphemously* of Good Works and the law of God. Dr. Whitehead observes, "The severity of this sentence, perhaps, arose from a misconception of the scope and design of Luther's words."—"That Luther sometimes spake incautiously, and even rashly, we may readily admit, and that his words, on such occasions, may be easily understood in a sense he did not intend; which was probably the case in the passages to which Mr. Wesley refers. "But," he observes, "some allowance is to be made for Luther's situation, who had to contend against what might be truly called, the CHRISTIAN WORLD."—And Mr. Wesley made that allowance: See his sermon on *Salvation by Faith*, before the University. Luther certainly *leaned*, at least, to Antinomianism at one period of his life, like other excellent men, who have awaked from the Pharisaic delusion.

June 18, 1741.—Being at Oxford, Mr. Wesley inquired concerning the exercises previous to the degree of Bachelor in Divinity. And though he, certainly, was well qualified to pass through the various gradations of academical honours, yet he soon laid aside the thought of proceeding further in them. Having visited London, he was again at Oxford in

the beginning of July; and, on the 6th, being in the College-library, "I took down," says he, "by mistake, the Works of Episcopius; which opening on an account of the Synod of Dort, I believed it might be useful to read it through. But what a scene is here disclosed? What a pity it is that the *holy* Synod of Trent, and that of Dort, did not sit at the same time!, nearly allied as they were, not only as to the *purity of doctrine*, which each of them established, but also as to the *spirit* wherewith they acted,—if the latter did not exceed!"—Perhaps this may, by some, be thought too severe. That excellent man, Episcopius, would not be considered an unexceptionable judge, had not his account of that Ecclesiastical Convention received ample confirmation from the official despatches to the British Ambassador at the Hague, which were transmitted from Dort, generally twice a week, by two violent Calvinists,—the famous John Hales, of Eton, and Walter Balcanqual; the latter of whom afterwards became more moderate in his sentiments; and the other, an avowed Arminian, and consequently a great sufferer under the Commonwealth. Nothing, therefore, can excuse the violent spirit displayed by that Synod, in its treatment of the cited persons and of the more moderate of its own members, and also in the ecclesiastical Canons which it wished to impose upon the Protestant part of Christendom. The succeeding Remonstrants, indeed, degenerated from the evangelical faith of Arminius: Not a few of them leaned to Pelagianism. This, however, was not the way to overthrow Calvinism: But *the work of God*, since that time, has so illustrated *his word*, as to enable Evangelical Truth to stand without such props.

July 15th, Mr. Wesley reached Bristol, and tells us, he came just in season: "For," says he, "a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own *imagination*s on the *word of God*, and that, not *written*, but *impressed on their hearts*. If these *impressions* be received as the rule of action, instead of the *written word*, I know nothing so wicked or absurd but we may fall into, and that without

remedy.”—We have here full and satisfactory evidence, that Mr. Wesley paid no regard to impressions or inward feelings, if they did not accord with the written word, by which alone we must judge of them. His belief on this subject was plainly this: (1.) Without experience of present salvation from our sins, the Gospel has no saving influence on our hearts. (2.) Such experience can have no existence without inward feeling; that is, a consciousness of that salvation. (3.) We must judge of the reality of our experience by the *word of God*, to which it will answer, as face answers to face in a glass, if it be of God; otherwise, a mere creature of our own imagination has deceived us.

The following Queries concerning the Methodists were sent, I apprehend, from Holland or Germany. The answer to each is in Mr. Wesley's hand-writing, and the date prefixed is 1741. But it must have been very early in this year, and before the separation of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.

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Quest. 1. Whether the number of the Methodists is considerable, among the students and learned men?

Ans. The number of the Methodists is not considerable, among the students and learned men.

2. Whether at Oxford, where the Methodists first sprung up, there be still many of them among the scholars?

There are very few of them now left among the scholars at Oxford.

3. Whether they are all of one mind, and whether they have the same principles? Especially,

4. Whether those Methodists, that are still at Oxford, approve of the sentiments and actions of Mr. Whitefield and Messrs. Wesley?

They are all of the same principles with the Church of England, as laid down in her Articles and Homilies: And (4.) do accordingly approve of the sentiments of Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley, and of their publishing them elsewhere, since they have been shut out of the churches.

5. How they came to revive those doctrines, hitherto neglected by the clergy of the Church of England, of Predestination, the New Birth, and Justification by Faith alone? And

6. Whether they have had the same from the Moravian brethren?

Predestination is not a doctrine taught by the Methodists.\* But they do teach, that men must be born again, and that we are saved through faith: And (6.) the latter of these they learned from some of the Moravian brethren; the former, by reading the New Testament.

7. Whether they be orthodox in other doctrinal points, and whether they lead an unblameable Christian life?

They openly challenge all that hear them, to answer those questions, "*Which of you convinceth me of sin?*," or of teaching any doctrine contrary to the Scripture? And the general accusation against them is, that they are "*righteous overmuch.*"

8. Whether they strictly regulate themselves according to the rule and discipline of the Moravian brethren; except that they still keep and observe the outward worship, according to the Church of England?

They do not regulate themselves according to the discipline of the Moravians, but of the English Church.

9. Whether they do any real good among the common people?

Very many of the common people among whom they preach, were profane swearers, and now fear an oath; were gluttons or drunkards, and are now temperate; were whoremongers, and are now chaste; were servants of the devil, and are now servants of God.

10. Why the Bishops do not effectually inhibit them, and hinder their field and street-preaching?

The Bishops do not inhibit their field and street-preaching: (1.) Because there is no law in England against it. (2.) Because God does not yet suffer them to do it without law.

\* He means *absolute* Predestination.

11. Whether the Archbishop of Canterbury is satisfied with them, as we are told?

The Archbishop of Canterbury is not satisfied with them; especially since Mr. Molther, in the name of the Moravian church, told his Grace their disapprobation of them, and, in particular, of their field-preaching.

12. Whether their private assemblies or societies are orderly and edifying?

Their private assemblies and societies are orderly, and many say they find them edifying.

13. What opinion the Presbyterians, and particularly Dr. Watts, has of them?

Most of the Presbyterians, and most of all other denominations, are of opinion, much religion hath made them mad.

14. Whether there are any Methodists among the Episcopal clergy of the Church of England?

Mr. Whitefield, Hutchins, Robson, and the two Messrs. Wesley, and several others, are priests of the Episcopal Church of England.



The openness with which Mr. Wesley answered the queries is striking: It is quite the man! His mind seems to have been wholly free from any desire to exaggerate or magnify the things of which he spake. Mr. Walker, of Truro, in one of his letters to Mr. Wesley, expressed a fear, lest he should be too careful about the reputation of the Methodists. Mr. Wesley replied, "I am just as careful about their reputation, as about the reputation of Prester John!" To maintain truth, was his one care. About the work he felt no anxiety.

Mr. Wesley, soon after this time, visited Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and the neighbouring towns and villages. As there is something remarkable in the commencement of his labours in this part of the kingdom, and as he ever after had a peculiar attachment to the town of Newcastle, in which he himself erected a large preaching-house, I shall give the account of

his entrance on that work in his own words. He says:—

“ Friday, May 28, 1742. We came to Newcastle about six in the evening, and, after a short refreshment, walked into the town. I was surprised ; so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, (even from the mouths of little children,) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for Him, who ‘ *came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*’

“ Sunday, 30.—At seven I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town ; and, standing at the end of the street with John Taylor,\* began to sing the hundredth psalm. Three or four people came to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose, there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching ; to whom I applied those solemn words, ‘ *He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes we are healed.*’

“ Observing the people, when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them, ‘ If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God’s help, I design to preach here again.’

“ At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields or on Kennington Common. I knew it was not possible for the one-half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear ; and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, ‘ *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.*’ After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press.

\* A good man, who travelled with him at that time.

I then went back another way than I came: But several were got to our inn before me, by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days; or, however, one day more. But I could not consent, having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

He now also visited Epworth, his native place, where his father had been Rector of the parish for many years, and had borne a faithful testimony, though almost all the seed seemed to have been sown as "*by the high-way side.*" "It being many years," says he, "since I had been in Epworth before, I went to an inn, in the middle of the town, not knowing whether there were any left in it now, who would not be ashamed of my acquaintance. But an old servant of my father, with two or three poor women, presently found me out. I asked her, Do you know any in Epworth who are in earnest to be saved? She answered, 'I am, by the grace of God; and I know *I am saved through faith.*' I asked, Have you then the peace of God? Do you know that he has forgiven your sins? She replied, 'I thank God, I know it well; and many here can say the same thing.'"

Mr. Wesley proceeds, "Sunday, June 6, 1742.—A little before the service began, I went to Mr. Romley, the curate, and offered to assist him, either by preaching or reading prayers: But he did not choose to accept of my assistance. The church was exceeding full in the afternoon, a rumour being spread that I was to preach. But the sermon, on '*Quench not the Spirit,*' was not suitable to the expectation of many of the hearers. Mr. Romley told them, 'One of the most dangerous ways of quenching the Spirit was by 'enthusiasm;' and enlarged on the character of an enthusiast in a very florid and oratorical manner. After sermon, John Taylor stood in the church-yard, and gave notice as the people were coming out, 'Mr. Wesley, not being permitted 'to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six 'o'clock.' Accordingly at six I came, and found such a con-



gregation as, I believe, Epworth never saw before. I stood near the East end of the church, upon my father's tomb-stone, and cried, '*The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*'"

He continues, "Friday 11th.—I preached again at Epworth on Ezekiel's vision of the resurrection of the dry bones. And great indeed was the shaking among them: Lamentation and great mourning were heard; God bowing their hearts, so that on every side, as with one accord, they lifted up their voice and wept aloud. Surely he who sent his Spirit to breathe upon them, will hear their cry and help them.

"Saturday 12th.—I preached on *the righteousness of the law, and the righteousness of faith*. While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead; and among the rest, such a cry was heard, of sinners groaning for '*the righteousness of faith*,' as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy, and broke out into thanksgiving; being assured, they now had the desire of their soul, the forgiveness of their sins.

"I observed a gentleman there, who was remarkable for not pretending to be of any religion at all. I was informed he had not been at public worship of any kind for upwards of thirty years. Seeing him stand as motionless as a statue, I asked him abruptly, 'Sir, are you a sinner?' He replied with a deep and broken voice, 'Sinner enough!', and continued staring upwards, till his wife, and a servant or two, were all in tears, put him into a chaise, and carried him home.

"Sunday 13th.—At six I preached for the last time in Epworth church-yard, (being to leave the town the next morning,) to a vast multitude gathered together from all parts, on the beginning of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. I continued among them for near three hours: and yet we scarce knew how to part. O let none think his labour of love is lost, because the fruit does not immediately appear! Near forty years did my father labour here: But he saw little

fruit of all his labour. I took some pains among this people too; and my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town, on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since, now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

On another visit to Epworth, he observes, "Sunday, January 2d, 1743.—At five, I preached on, '*So is every one who is born of the Spirit.*' About eight I preached from my father's tomb, on Heb. viii. 11. Many from the neighbouring towns, asked, 'If it would not be well, as it was Sacrament-Sunday, for them to receive it?'—I told them, by all means. But it would be more respectful first, to ask Mr. Romley, the curate's leave. One did so in the name of the rest; to whom he said, 'Pray tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give *him* the sacrament: For he is not fit.'

"How wise a God is our God! There could not have been so fit a place, under heaven, where this should befall me first, as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where, *according to the strictest sect of our religion*, I had so long lived a *Pharisee*! It was also fit in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table, where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life, should be one who owed his all in this world, to the tender love which my father had shown to his, as well as personally to himself."\*

On a subsequent visit to Newcastle, where his brother Charles had been preaching some weeks before, with great success, a society was formed. The next morning Mr. Wesley began to preach at five o'clock, a thing unheard of in those parts, till he introduced the practice; which he did every where, if there was any probability that a few persons could be gathered to hear him. On the 18th, he says, "I

\* I have documents before me which abundantly prove this.

pleased to work in different places. The grace of God flows here, with a wider stream than it did at first either at Bristol, could not but observe, the different manner wherein God is or Kingswood. But it does not sink so deep as it did there. Few are thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarce any can witness, that the Lamb of God has taken away their sins. I never saw," says he, "a work of God in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rises step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as hath frequently been done at Bristol or London; but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls. I saw none in the triumph of faith, which has been so common in other places. But the believers go on calm and steady. Let God do as seemeth him good."

Dec. 20th.—Having obtained a piece of ground, forty yards in length, to build a house for their meetings and public worship, they laid the first stone of the building. It being computed, that such a house as was proposed, could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all. "I was of another mind," says Mr. Wesley, "nothing doubting, but as it was begun for God's sake, he would provide what was needful for the finishing of it."

December 30th.—He took his leave for the present of Newcastle, and the towns where he preached in the neighbourhood, and came as far as Darlington that night. "What encouragement," says he, "have we to speak for God! At our inn we met an ancient man, who seemed, by his conversation, never to have thought whether he had a soul or not. Before we set out, I spoke a few words concerning his cursing and idle conversation. The man appeared quite broken in pieces. The tears started into his eyes; and he acknowledged, with abundance of thanks, his own guilt, and the goodness of God."

Mr. Wesley informed me, that he had one pound six shil-

lings when he undertook to build the preaching-house at Newcastle, at that time the largest in England. Soon after he began, he received a letter from a pious Quaker, (who had heard of the work at Newcastle,) in the following terms:—“ Friend Wesley, I have had a dream concerning thee. I thought I saw thee surrounded with a large flock of sheep, which thou didst not know what to do with. My first thought after I awoke was, that it was thy flock at Newcastle, and that thou hadst no house of worship for them. I have enclosed a note for one hundred pounds, which may help thee to provide a house.”—The building rose by supplies received from time to time, like Professor Francke’s at Halle, and Mr. Wesley called it by the same name,—“ The Orphan House.”

While Mr. Wesley thus went on in the work of the Lord, the spurious works of man sometimes encountered him. Having received a letter pressing him to go without delay into Leicestershire, he set out. “ The next afternoon,” says he, “ I stopped a little at Newport-Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know, ‘ Whether I held the doctrine of the *decrees*, as he did.’ But I told him over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer; told me, I was rotten at heart; and supposed I was of John Wesley’s followers. I told him, No, I am John Wesley himself. Upon which he appeared,

*Improvvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem  
Pressit——*

‘ As one who had unawares trodden on a snake.’ And would gladly have run away outright. But being the better

mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to shew him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton."

As the various societies now began to walk by rule, and to be trained up in the discipline as well as the doctrine of the Lord, I shall here give a circumstantial account of *the discipline* which was gradually introduced among them; only observing, that there was no previous design or plan at all, but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. And as this is so delicate and so important a part of Mr. Wesley's Life, and of the History of that revival of religion, in which he was the chief instrument, I shall give the relation in his own words.

With regard to the formation of the Societies, he observes, "It quickly appeared, that their thus uniting together answered the end proposed. In a few months the far greater part of those who had begun to '*fear God, and work righteousness,*' but were not united together, grew faint in their minds, and fell back into what they were before. Meanwhile the far greater part of those, who were thus united together, continued '*striving to enter in at the straight gate,*' and '*to lay hold on eternal life.*'

"Upon reflection," continues he, "I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth, '*preached the Gospel to every creature.*' And the *οἱ ακροαται*, '*the body of hearers,*' were mostly either Jews or Heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin and seek the Gospel-salvation, they immediately joined them together, took account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these *κατηχημενοι* (*catechumens*, as they were then called,) apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities.

“ But it was not long before an objection was made to this, which had not once entered into my thought. ‘ Is not this ‘ making a schism ? Is not the joining these people together, ‘ *gathering churches out of churches ?*’

“ It was easily answered, if you mean only *gathering people out of buildings called churches*, it is. But if you mean, dividing Christians from Christians, and so destroying Christian fellowship, it is not. For (1.) These were not Christians before they were thus joined. Most of them were barefaced heathens. (2.) Neither are they Christians, from whom you suppose them to be divided. You will not look me in the face, and say they are. What ! Drunken christians ? Cursing and swearing christians ? Lying christians ? Cheating christians ? If these are Christians at all, they are *devil-christians*, (as the poor Malabarians term them.) (3.) Neither are they divided any more than they were before, even from these wretched *devil-christians*. They are as ready as ever to assist them, and to perform every office of real kindness toward them. (4.) If it be said, ‘ But there are some true ‘ Christians in the parish, and you destroy the Christian fellowship between these and them.’—I answer, that which never existed, cannot be destroyed. But the fellowship you speak of never existed. Therefore it cannot be destroyed. Which of these true Christians had any such fellowship with these ? Who watched over them in love ? Who marked their growth in grace ? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time ? Who prayed with them and for them, as they had need ? This, and this alone, is Christian fellowship ; but, alas ! Where is it to be found ? Look East or West, North or South ; name what parish you please. Is this Christian fellowship there ? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand ? What Christian connexion is there between them ? What intercourse in spiritual things ? What watching over each other’s souls ? What bearing of one another’s burdens ? What a mere jest is it

then, to talk so gravely, of *destroying* what never was? The real truth is just the reverse of this: we introduce Christian fellowship where it was utterly destroyed. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.

“ But as much as we endeavoured to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not *live the Gospel*. I do not know, that any hypocrites were crept in; for indeed there was no temptation. But several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived, that there were many ill consequences of suffering these to remain among us. It was dangerous to others; inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a scandal on their brethren, as exposed them to what was not properly, ‘*the reproach of Christ*.’ It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil spoken of.

“ We groaned under these inconveniences long before a remedy could be found. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol, concerning the means of paying the debts there; when one stood up and said, ‘ Let every member of the Society give a *penny* a week till all are ‘ paid.’ Another answered, ‘ But many of them are poor, ‘ and cannot afford to do it.’ ‘ Then,’ said he, ‘ put eleven ‘ of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, ‘ well. I will call on them weekly, and if they can give ‘ nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And ‘ each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.’ It was done. In a while some of these informed me, ‘ they ‘ found such and such a one did not live as he ought.’ It struck me immediately, ‘ This is the thing; the very thing ‘ we have wanted so long.’ I called together all the leaders

of the classes, (so we used to term them and their companies,) and desired, that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly : They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence.

“ As soon as possible the same method was used in London and all other places. Evil men were detected, and reproved. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly ; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared, that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced, that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the Society.

“ It is the business of a Leader.

“ I. To see each person in his Class, once a week at the least ; in order, to inquire how their souls prosper ? To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require ; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor.

“ II. To meet the minister and the stewards of the Society, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that are disorderly and will not be reproved ; to pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

“ At first they visited each person at his own house ; but this was soon found not so expedient ; and that on many accounts.—(1.) It took up more time, than most of the leaders had to spare. (2.) Many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, who would not suffer them to be thus visited. (3.) At the houses of those who were not so averse, they often had no opportunity of speaking to them but in company. And this did not at all answer the end proposed, of exhorting, comforting or reproofing. (4.) It frequently



happened, that one affirmed what another denied. And this could not be cleared up without seeing them together. (5.) Little misunderstandings and quarrels of various kinds frequently arose among relations or neighbours; effectually to remove which, it was needful to see them face to face. Upon all these considerations it was agreed, that those of each class should meet altogether. And by this means, a more full inquiry was made into the behaviour of every person. Those who could not be visited at home, or no otherwise than in company, had the same advantage with others. Advice or reproof was given as need required; quarrels made made up, misunderstandings removed. And after an hour or two spent in this labour of love, they concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.

“ It can scarce be conceived, what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to *bear one another's burdens*, and *naturally to care for each other*. As they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. And ‘ *speaking the truth in love, they grew up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increased unto the edifying of itself in love.*’

“ About this time, I was informed, that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the School, and, (when they could spare the time,) spent the greater part of the night in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this; but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians,\*

\* The Vigils or Eves of particular days, mentioned in our book of Common Prayer, were such Watch-nights.

I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed, it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them, on the Friday nearest the full-moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and, withal, that I intended to preach; desiring, they and they only would meet me there, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday, abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine; and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

“ This we have continued to do once a month ever since, in Bristol, London, and Newcastle, as well as Kingswood. And exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: It has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the hearts, even of those who, till then, knew him not. If it be said, ‘ This was only owing ‘ to the novelty of the thing, (the circumstance which still ‘ draws such multitudes together at those seasons,) or, perhaps, ‘ to the awful silence of the night;’ I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: However, the impression then made on many souls has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.

“ Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture, that, either by the novelty of this *ancient* custom, or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to ‘ *save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins,*’ am I clear before God, if I do it not?—if I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?

“ As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this, I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every

member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their Leaders and neighbours, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? At these seasons, I likewise particularly inquire, whether there be any misunderstanding or differences among them? that every hindrance of peace and brotherly love may be taken out of the way.

“ To each of those, of whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose; every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given, as if I had wrote at length, ‘ I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God ‘ and works righteousness.’

“ Those who bore these tickets, (these *Συμβολα* or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them; being of just the same force with the *επιστολαι συστατικαι*, *commendatory letters*, mentioned by the Apostle;) wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished when the Society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation; (for so often the tickets are changed;) and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of this community.

“ The thing which I was greatly afraid of all this time, and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing, was, a narrowness of spirit, a party zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels; that miserable bigotry, which makes many so unready to believe, that there is any work of God but among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this, frequently to read, to all who were willing to hear, the accounts I received from time to time, of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own and other countries, not among us alone, but among those of various opinions

and denominations. For this I allotted one evening in every month, and I find no cause to repent my labour.\* It is generally a time of strong consolation to those who love God, and all mankind for his sake; as well as of breaking down the partition walls, which either the craft of the devil, or the folly of men, has built up; and of encouraging every child of God to say, (O when shall it once be?) ‘*Whosoever doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*’

“By the blessing of God upon their endeavours to help one another, many found ‘*the pearl of great price.*’ Being justified by faith, they had ‘*peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*’ These felt a more tender affection than before to those who were partakers of like precious faith; and hence arose such a confidence in each other, that they poured out their souls in each other’s bosom. Indeed, they had great need so to do; for the war was not over, as they had supposed. But they had still to wrestle both *with flesh and blood, and with principalities and powers*; so that temptations were on every side; and often temptations of such a kind, as they knew not how to speak of in a class; in which persons of every sort, young and old, men and women, met together.

“These, therefore, wanted some means of closer union: They wanted to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still ‘*easily beset*’ them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them. And they were the more desirous of this, when they observed it was the express advice of an inspired writer, ‘*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed.*’†

“In compliance with their desire, I divided them into smaller companies; putting the married or single men, and

\* See page 500.

† James v. 16.

married or single women, together. The chief rules of these bands, (i. e. little companies, so that old English word signifies,) run thus :

“ In order to ‘ *confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed,*’ we intend, (1.) To meet once a week at least. (2.) To come punctually at the hour appointed. (3.) To begin with singing or prayer. (4.) To speak, each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our soul, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting. And, (5.) To desire some person among us, (thence called a Leader,) to speak *his* own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

“ In order to increase in them a grateful sense of all the mercies of the Lord, I desired that, one evening in a quarter, they should all come together, that we might ‘ *eat bread*’ (as the ancient Christians did,) ‘ *with gladness and singleness of heart.*’ At these *Love-Fests*, (so we termed them, retaining the name, as well as the thing, which was in use from the beginning,\*) our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with the ‘ *meat that perisheth,*’ but with ‘ *that which endureth to everlasting life.*’

“ Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed, from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed one for another, that they might be healed of the faults they had confessed ; and it was so. The chains were broken, the bands were burst in sunder, and sin had no more dominion over them. Many were delivered from the temptations out of which, till then, they found no way to escape. They were built up in our most holy faith.

\* Jude 12.

They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.\*

“ And yet while most of these who were thus intimately joined together, went on daily from faith to faith ; some fell from the faith, either all at once, by falling into known wilful sin ; or gradually, and almost insensibly, by giving way in what they called little things ; by sins of omission, by yielding to heart-sins, or by not watching unto prayer. The exhortations and prayers used among the believers, did no longer profit these. They wanted advice and instructions suited to their case ; which, as soon as I observed, I separated them from the rest, and desired them to meet me apart on Saturday evenings.

“ At this hour, all the hymns, exhortations, and prayers, are adapted to their circumstances ; being wholly suited to those who did see God, but have now lost the light of his countenance ; and who mourn after him, and refuse to be comforted, till they know he has healed all their backslidings.

“ By applying both the threats and promises of God to these real (not nominal) *penitents*, and by crying to God in their behalf, we endeavoured to bring them back to the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls ; not by any of the fopperies of the Roman church, although, in some measure, countenanced by antiquity. In prescribing hair-shirts and bodily austerities, we durst not follow even the ancient church ; although we had unawares done so, both in dividing *οι τριστοι*, the *believers*, from the rest of the Society, and in separating the *penitents* from them, and appointing a peculiar service for them.”

\* Christian fellowship must suffer a severe wound wherever those meetings are discontinued. Mr. Wesley used often to say, “ Where there is no band-meeting, there is no Methodism.” I shall consider this subject more fully in the second volume.

Upon his return from Yorkshire, Mr. Wesley spent some time in and near Bristol. He then revisited London, where he arrived on Tuesday, July 20th, 1742, being hastened by the account of his mother's illness. He found her on the borders of eternity, free from all doubt and fear, and from every desire, but (as soon as God should call,) "*to depart and to be with Christ.*"

But I must give Mr. Wesley's own account of this affecting occurrence.—"Friday, July 30, about three in the afternoon, I went to my mother, and found her change was near. I sat down on the bed-side. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but, I believe, quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four, the silver cord was loosening, and the wheel breaking at the cistern; and then, without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, 'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.'

"Sunday, August 1. Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon, I committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of Scripture from which I afterwards spoke, was, '*I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened:—And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*' It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see, on this side eternity.

"We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:

"Here lies the body of Mrs. SUSANNAH WESLEY, the

youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. SAMUEL ANNESLEY.

“ IN sure and stedfast hope to rise,  
And claim her mansion in the skies,  
A Christian here her flesh laid down,  
The cross exchanging for a crown.

“ True daughter of affliction, she,  
Inur'd to pain and misery,  
Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,  
A legal night of seventy years.

“ The Father then reveal'd his Son,  
Him in the broken bread made known :  
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,  
And found the earnest of her heaven.

“ Meet for the fellowship above.  
She heard the call, ‘ Arise, my love !’  
‘ I come,’ her dying looks replied,  
And lamb-like, as her Lord, she died.”

Some gentlemen have considered this epitaph in the usual style of criticism, and have seemed insensible to its excellence. However qualified such may be to judge of poetry in general, the poetry of Mr. Charles Wesley seems really too high for them. To me, not wholly unacquainted with the art, this epitaph has always appeared inexpressibly beautiful, and highly characteristic. It is *simple, pure, unlaboured*; and has all that elevation, and yet sobriety, of spirit, which, as Christian believers, we expect to find in those who have “*tasted the powers of the world to come.*” Mr. John Wesley, a most excellent judge of poetry, would not have suffered it to pass, if it were not worthy both of the author and the subject. The “plain stone,” too, with the absence of all decoration in the account, is highly in character. *The praise of a Christian is not of man, but of God.* The brothers could not forget this, for they lived in the whole spirit of it. Such were all Mr. Wesley’s accounts of his departed friends.



and fellow-labourers. Those concerning Mr. Fletcher, and his own beloved brother Charles, did not together make up ten lines.

Dr. Clarke, in his Memoirs of the Wesley family, just now published, inserts a letter from Mr. Annesley to his sister, Mrs. Wesley, and adds, "A part only of Mrs. Wesley's answer to her angry brother is preserved." I am happy in being able to present to the reader the original letter. It was overlooked, with other valuable papers, in the *distribution* which took place, as already mentioned in the Preface to this work. It is of considerable length; but I shall omit only that part which relates to the *temporal* affairs in dispute, and which Dr. Clarke has already published. Perhaps, a more genuine picture of sanctified affliction was never presented to the world. It is dated January 20, 1722, to which is added "My birth-day." This letter will illustrate that couplet in the epitaph,

True daughter of affliction she,  
Inur'd to pain and misery.

TO MR. ANNESLEY.

"SIR,

"The unhappy differences between you and Mr. Wesley, have prevented my writing for some years, not knowing whether a letter from me would be acceptable, and being unwilling to be troublesome. But feeling life ebb apace, and having a desire to be at peace with all men, especially you, before my exit, I have ventured to send one letter more, hoping you will give yourself the trouble to read it without prejudice.

"I am, I believe, got on the right side of fifty, infirm and weak; yet, old as I am, since I have taken my husband 'for better for worse,' I'll make my residence with him. '*Where he lives will I live, and where he dies will I die, and there will I be buried.* God do so unto me and more also, if aught

*but death part him and me.* Confinement is nothing to one that, by sickness, is compelled to spend great part of her time in a chamber; and I sometimes think, that, if it were not on account of Mr. Wesley and the children, it would be perfectly indifferent to my soul, whether she ascended to the Supreme Origin of being from a jail or a palace, for God is every where. No walls, or locks, or bars, nor deepest shade, nor closest solitude, excludes his presence; and in what place soever he vouchsafes to manifest himself, that place is heaven! And that man whose heart is penetrated with Divine love, and enjoys the manifestations of God's blissful presence, is happy, let his outward condition be what it will. He is rich, '*as having nothing, yet possessing all things.*' This world, this present state of things, is but for a time. What is now future, will be present, as what is already past, once was; and then, as Mr. Pascal observes, a little earth thrown on our cold head will for ever determine our hopes and our condition; nor will it signify much who personated the prince or the beggar, since, with respect to the exterior, all must stand on the same level after death.

"Upon the best observation I could ever make, I am induced to believe, that it is much easier to be contented without riches than with them. It is so natural for a rich man to make his gold his god, (for whatever a person loves most, that thing, be it what it will, he will certainly make his god,) it is so very difficult not to trust in, not to depend on it, for support and happiness, that I do not know one rich man in the world with whom I would exchange conditions.

"You say, 'I hope you have recovered your loss by fire 'long since.' No; and, it is to be doubted, never shall. Mr. Wesley rebuilt his house in less than one year; but nearly thirteen years are elapsed since it was burned, yet it is not half furnished, nor his wife and children half clothed to this day. It is true, that, by the benefactions of his friends, together with what he had himself, he paid the first; but the latter is

not paid yet, or, what is much the same, money which was borrowed for clothes and furniture, is yet unpaid. You go on, ‘My brother’s living of three hundred a year, as they tell me—’ *They*, who? I wish those that say so were compelled to make it so. It may as truly be said, that his living is ten thousand a year, as three hundred. I have, Sir, formerly laid before you the true state of our affairs. I have told you, that the living was always let for a hundred and sixty pounds a year: That taxes, poor assessments, sub-rents, tenths, procurations, synodals, &c. took up nearly thirty pounds of that moiety, so that there needs no great skill in arithmetic to compute what remains.

“What we shall, or shall not need hereafter, God only knows; but, at present, there hardly ever was a greater co-incidence of unprosperous events in one family than is now in ours. I am rarely in health. Mr. Wesley declines apace. My dear Emily, who, in my present exigences, would exceedingly comfort me, is compelled to go to service in Lincoln, where she is a teacher in a boarding-school. My second daughter, Suky, a pretty woman, and worthy a better fate, when, by your last unkind letters, she perceived, that all her hopes in you were frustrated, rashly threw herself away upon a man, (if a *man* he may be called, that is little inferior to the apostate angels in wickedness,) that is not only her plague, but a constant affliction to the family. O Sir! O brother! Happy, thrice happy, are you! happy is my sister, that buried your children in infancy! secure from temptation, secure from guilt, secure from want or shame, or loss of friends! They are safe, beyond the reach of pain or sense of misery; being gone hence, nothing can touch them further. Believe me, Sir, it is better to mourn ten children dead, than one living; and I have buried many: But here I must pause awhile.

“The other children, though wanting neither industry, nor capacity for business, we cannot put to any, by reason we have

neither money nor friends to assist us in doing it. Nor is there a gentleman's family near us in which we can place them, unless as common servants; and that even yourself would not think them fit for, if you saw them, so that they must stay at home while they have a home; and how long will that be?—Innumerable are other uneasinesses, too tedious to mention, inasmuch that what with my own indisposition, my master's infirmities, the absence of my eldest, the ruin of my second daughter, and the inconceivable distress of all the rest, I have enough to turn a stronger head than mine. And were it not that God supports, and by His omnipotent goodness often totally suspends all sense of worldly things, I could not sustain the weight many days, perhaps hours. But even in this low ebb of fortune, I am not without some lucid interval. Unspeakable are the blessings of privacy and leisure!—when the mind emerges from the corrupt animality to which she is united, and by a flight, peculiar to her nature, soars beyond the bounds of time and place, in contemplation of the Invisible Supreme, whom she perceives to be her only happiness, her proper centre! In whom she finds repose inexplicable! such as the world can neither give nor take away.

“The late Archbishop of York once said to me, (when my master was in Lincoln Castle,) among other things, ‘Tell me,’ says he, ‘Mrs. Wesley, whether you ever really ‘wanted bread.’—My Lord, said I, I will freely own to your Grace, that, strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then, I have had so much care to get it before it was eat, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me. And I think to have bread on such terms, is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all.—‘You are certainly in ‘the right,’ replied my Lord, and seemed for awhile very thoughtful. Next morning he made me a handsome present; nor did he ever repent having done so. On the contrary, I have reason to believe it afforded some comfortable reflections before his exit.

“ You proceed, ‘ When I come home, (Ah ! would to  
 ‘ God that might ever be !) if any of your daughters want me,  
 ‘ (as I think they will not,) I shall do as God enables me.’—  
 I must answer this with a sigh from the bottom of my heart.  
 Sir, you know the proverb, *While the grass grows, the steed  
 starves*. The passage relating to Annesley, I have formerly  
 replied to. You go on, ‘ Another hindrance is, my brother,  
 ‘ I think, is too zealous for the party he fancies in the right,  
 ‘ and has unluckily to do with the opposite faction.’—Whether  
 those you employ are factious or not, I shall not determine;  
 but very sure I am, Mr. Wesley is not so. He is zealous in a  
 good cause, as every one ought to be, but the furthest from  
 being a party-man of any man in the world. My experience hath  
 convinced me, that he is one of those who, our Saviour saith,  
 are not *so wise in their generation as the children of this world*.  
 And did I not know that Almighty Wisdom hath views and  
 ends in fixing the bounds of our habitation, which are out of  
 our ken, I should think it a thousand pities, that a man of his  
 brightness and rare endowments of learning, and useful knowl-  
 edge in relation to the Church of God, should be confined to an  
 obscure corner of the country, where his talents are buried, and  
 he is determined to a way of life for which he is not so well  
 qualified as I could wish. It is with pleasure I behold, in my  
 eldest son, an aversion from accepting a small country cure;  
 since, blessed be God, he has a fair reputation for learning and  
 piety, preaches well, and is capable of doing more good where  
 he is.\*

“ I shall not detain you any longer, not so much as to  
 apologize for the tedious length of this letter.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your obliged,

“ And most obedient Servant and Sister,

“ SUSANNA WESLEY.”

\* See Pages 212 and 232.

It has been asserted that the fortune acquired by Mr. Annesley in India, was lost; and it is supposed, that he was himself murdered. Of the manner of his death I have no account, but his widow certainly enjoyed a considerable part, if not the whole of his fortune; for at her death she bequeathed one thousand pounds to Mrs. Wesley, the interest to be paid to her during her life, and at her decease the principal sum to be divided among her children. Miss Kizzy Wesley, in a letter now before me, dated, July, 1734, informs her brother John of this bequest; and adds, “My father has not been very easy ever since he heard of it, because he cannot dispose of it.”\* Had it been left to him, I think there cannot be a doubt but he would have paid his debts with it, and published his favourite work on *JOB*.

Mr. Charles Wesley was one day relating to me, seemingly with much pleasure, how useful his father had been when he was confined in Lincoln Castle, as mentioned in Mrs. Wesley’s letter to her brother. “By his constantly reading prayers and preaching,” said he, “the whole gaol was reformed.” Mrs. Hall, who was present, exclaimed, “Brother! how can you speak of these things?”—He replied in his usual short way, “If you are ashamed of poverty, you are ashamed of your Master.” Happy for that family that they had been early taught the necessity of *poverty of spirit*, which alone prepares the human heart to submit to bear the *yoke of Christ*.

It must affect every benevolent mind, that such a family should be all their days thus depressed. But when we consider, that the Lord willed that *the plant of renown*, which was *to give life to the world*, should spring out of *a dry ground*,—from a family brought to deep poverty, we shall not wonder *as*

\* I think we may safely conclude, that this bequest strengthened Mr. J. Wesley in his refusal to solicit the living of Epworth. We see that his mother was not left in so destitute a condition as some of his Biographers have supposed.

*though some strange thing happened* to the family of Epworth. It has been common to many whom the Lord has used as His choicest instruments. The venerable head of the family had a presentiment, that his family would become eminent in the land. Mr. John Wesley informed me, that his father often declared, and in those strong terms, which were usual with him, “ When every creaturely help shall fail, God will undertake for my family ; I know he will.” He did so ; but how differently from the expectation of this good man ! *The work of God*, which made this family so eminent, left them as poor as it found them ! Such was the eminent faithfulness of the Lord’s chief Instrument in that work !

I have now before me many letters and documents, which abundantly detail the sufferings of the family, especially of the females. But the accounts already published must suffice. My task is of another kind. The views, cares, and vicissitudes of this perishing world, should not be too much mixed with that blessed *work of faith*, which issues in life eternal, and concerning which the most honoured instrument often declared, and even so early as the year 1738, when it had just shewed its high origin, “ It shall stand while sun and moon endure !”

The accounts which I have given of Mrs. Wesley, are sufficient to discover her genuine character. She had an excellent understanding, and great penetration. Her eye was single : She inquired after truth, and followed it wherever she found it. Hence she became a witness of the truth of Mr. John Wesley’s well-known declaration, recorded (as we shall see) in the Minutes of the first Conference, “ All (all Gospel blessings) will follow persevering sincerity.” Her resolution could not be shaken. The smiles and frowns of the world she trod under her feet ; but, at the same time, she discovered the greatest caution in admitting any thing as true, which to her appeared novel. In some things she evinced the soul of a Missionary ; and, therefore, was peculiarly qualified to

reside with her son, whose High Church principles might otherwise have induced him, as in the case of Mr. Maxfield, to reject that assistance which the Lord afforded him, and which was so indispensably necessary to enable him, to diffuse the savour and power of religion through this and distant lands.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





